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Look, just what are you reading this bit for?

Well? Come on...

I thought so. You haven't got a good excuse at all. It just happens to be here.

Editorials in *White Dwarf* aren't supposed to be read. That's why we've included the rest of the magazine. And what a 'rest'! This issue has something for everybody in it: *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay, AD&D, Judge Dredd, Call of Cthulhu, Rogue Trooper, Blood Royale*... get the picture? *Vance's Evocation of Arcane Delight, Letters from a Foreign Land, Bounden to the See of Rome, 'Eavy Metal*... All are there to tickle the grey matter, delight the intellect, tweak the synapses, cause a mental hernia... erm, perhaps not the last. A small universe of talent has been gathered to put this issue together. It's all far too good to waste time reading boring bits like this...

And then there's votes to be cast in the Games Day Awards poll, not to mention the chance to win one of 55 copies of the brand new mega-epic tabletop rules *Warhammer 40,000*!

Well, what are you waiting for?

All these Wonders Of The Age aren't to be found in this bit, you know.

Read and Enjoy!

Mike Brunton

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OPEN BOX

BLOCK MANIA/MEGA MANIA

Boardgames
Games Workshop £12.95/£7.95

Let's start with **Block Mania**. Open the box and you've got two boards both showing a sectional view of a city block. There are two counter sheets, a rule book, a detailed blocker's manual and a pack of cards with different items and events on *both* sides. The counter sheets contain the residents of each player block - the blocker counters - along with a selection of equipment counters, damage markers and counters for the judges.

The object of the game is fairly straightforward. Players have got to cause as much harm to their neighbours as they possibly can, before the Judges arrive. This means they have to try and blow up, set fire to and scrawl all over the neighbours block while defending their own block. Eliminating as many of the neighbours as possible helps. This seemed like a totally splendid notion in its own right, so the rules were designed to be as simple and unobtrusive as possible, while keeping the game going at a suitably fast pace.

To speed things up, *Deployment* and *Command Point* rules are used. These keep the number of blocker counters in play down to a reasonably low level and mean that a player is only allowed to move about 2-6 counters per turn. At the start of the turn players roll two dice for their command point allowance. Command points can either be used to deploy new units - for four points - or to activate existing units. Activation allows the player to move the counter up to its move allowance. Activating a unit depends on its command value. Mobs cost four points because it's so difficult to get them to do anything. The highly trained City-Def units are smaller and weaker, but they can move faster and only cost one point to activate.

Once activated, blocker counters are free to move around inside the blocks, helped by the elevators and moving sidewalks. They can move between the blocks via the sky-rail, ped-ways, roads and the 'tween block plazas. Weapons and equipment are drawn randomly when blockers visit an armoury or shopping mall. Some units, like the City-Def, are deployed already armed.

There's a variety of different weaponry, ranging from humble spray paints and stump guns to flamers, missile launchers and heavy lasers. Blockers with heavy weapons can position themselves in the windows and blast away at the neighbours, while those with demolition charges, engineering gear, flame throwers and spray paints can move into the enemy blocks to do their worst.

One of the most satisfying aspects of the game is demolishing the neighbouring block. The damage system is streamlined and damage spreads fairly randomly. One effective hit on a block is not likely to cause further damage but hits on areas which have already suffered structural damage are quite likely to spread - causing vast chunks of the block to collapse! Once a block has taken a severe beating, which happens in most games, additional damage can bring the whole place tumbling down. Great fun.

Of course it's not reasonable to let this go on until everyone is dead and everything is destroyed. Eventually, Judges arrive on the scene with their H-wagons, stumm gas, riot foam, and sonic cannon. This is Block Mania's *endgame*. Play proceeds more or less normally but the blockers are now allowed to use the devastating *Justice* side of the card deck. Blocker counters carry on moving and attacking, but their numbers dwindle, and the pace of violence slows down until there's no-one left who can deploy or move their counters.

The card pack deserves a special mention. Each card is double-sided, with a *Mania* and a *Justice* side. The Mania sides allow players to do wacky things like trapping units in lifts, blowing up the pedways and making enemy fatties stop and have a snack. The Justice sides come into game later on during the endgame. The card deck is also the timing mechanism for the game.

Mega-Mania supplies players with two new blocks and two new counter sets, allowing for three or four player games. Counters are allowed to move off the extreme left-hand edge of the board, straight onto the extreme right-hand edge of the board, which gives a wraparound effect.

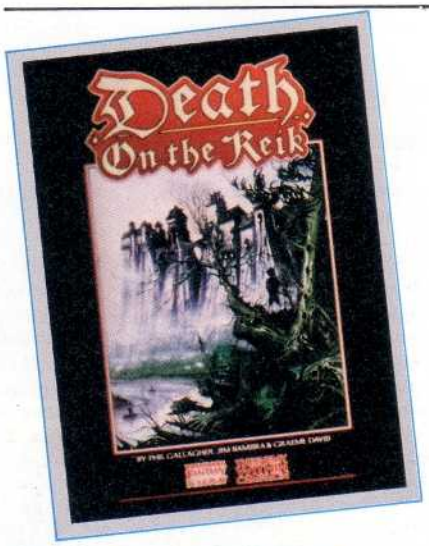
Because vehicle, sky-rail and flying movement is so fast - it only costs one move point to move anywhere else on the board - attacks can be staged with awe-inpsiring rapidity. Defenders are going to have problems guessing where the next onslaught is coming from.

Mega-mania also points up the fascinating possiblities of the endgame as the players gang up against the overall leader and possible victory can change hands several times over quite a small number of turns.

Richard Halliwell

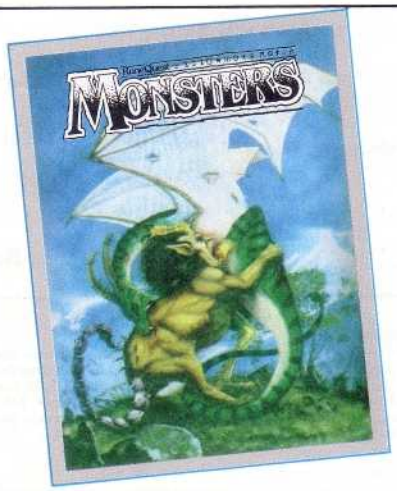
THE TALISMAN DUNGEON

Talisman Boardgame
Expansion Set
Games Workshop
£7.95



DEATH ON THE REIK

Warhammer Fantasy
Roleplay Supplement
Games Workshop £9.95



RUNEQUEST MONSTERS

Role Playing Aid
Games Workshop/
Chaosium/Avalon Hill £9.95

The first thing that needs to be said about **The Talisman Dungeon** is that it is not just another *Talisman* expansion set. This is clear as soon as you open the box, for what do you find inside but... a new board!

The Talisman Dungeon adds a complete, self-contained new board area to the game, complete with its own deck of 36 *Dungeon* cards, 4 *Doorway* cards linking the Dungeon to the main board, and a sheet of special rules for action in the Dungeon.

The *Doorway* cards are shuffled into the main *Adventure* deck, and play carries on as normal. When a player encounters a *Doorway*, it remains on the space where it is found, and any player landing there has the option to enter the Dungeon rather than carrying on round the main board. The Dungeon has its own deck of encounter cards, and when a player reaches the end of the Dungeon, a die is rolled to see where he or she has re-emerged onto the main board. This may be closer to the Crown of Command, or further away from it, but the mechanism is nicely balanced so that the addition of the Dungeon board doesn't simply make the game longer, and doesn't unbalance the game by providing too much of a short-cut.

The artwork on the board and cards is well-done and maintains the feel of the basic game, and there are several interesting locations within the Dungeon - a torture chamber, a cell, and several others. There are some special rules to do with the dungeon - certain events, such as the Blizzard, don't affect characters in the Dungeon, while the special abilities of some characters are ignored or amended in the Dungeon environment. The extra rules set all this out clearly and they are soon picked up. The Dungeon encounters can vary from Rats to a Bronze Dragon, and all work well - as you would expect in an expansion game from Bob Harris, the game's inventor. There's even a rules option to play short games using the Dungeon on its own, simply racing from one end to the other.

As well as the Dungeon and all the cards and rules needed to make it work, *The Talisman Dungeon* also includes 14 new characters, including the Inquisitor, the Swashbuckler, the Sprite and the Martial Artist, all with their own special abilities. These, of course, can be used in any *Talisman* game, with or without the addition of the Dungeon board.

All in all, *The Talisman Dungeon* is a significant addition to the game. Hardened *Talisman* fans will probably agree that it's the best expansion set yet, and if you own the game, it's definitely worth looking at.

Graeme Davis

Death on the Reik might be bit later than originally planned, but when you see all the things you get in the box, you'll agree that the wait was worthwhile.

Packed into the box are: an 88-page adventure book, a 20-page rules supplement, 20 pages of player hand-outs, GM's maps and reference sheets, and an amazing A2 full colour map of a Reikland Castle, backed by a 2-colour area map.

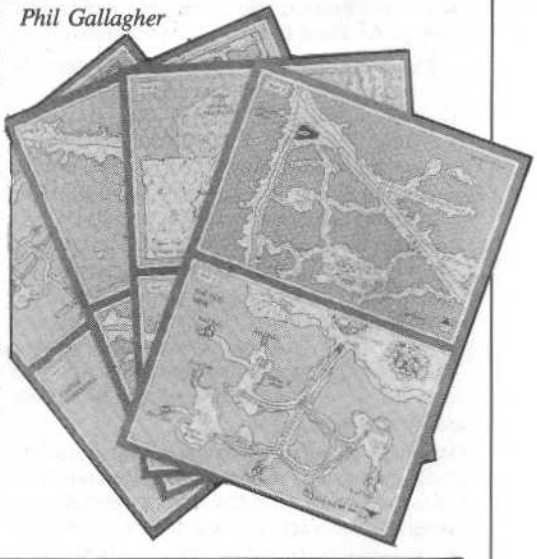
The adventure book picks up the *Enemy Within* campaign from *Shadows Over Bogenhafen* and has enough material to be considered a campaign in its own right. Martin McKenna's illustrations are nothing short of superb - he deserves a lot of credit for the way he's captured the atmosphere of the Reikland setting, not to mention the personalities of the dozens of NPCs.

The aim was always to give the player characters maximum freedom of movement, without requiring hours of preparation from the GM. Thus, we've tried to provide a variety of locations throughout the Reikland, with numerous sub-plots and motivations for the GM to use as prods when necessary. And here the rules supplement (entitled *River Life of The Empire*) comes into its own. It tells you just about everything you could wish to know about travelling The Empire's waterways - handling boats, dealing with adverse weather, boat critical hits - there's even a set of trading rules (cunningly linked to the *Reikland* Gazetteer), for those entrepreneurial PCs who want to make a bit of cash as they sail from place to place. And of course there's a plethora of brief encounter ideas and cameo adventure outlines which GMs can use as a basis for improvisation between the main adventure encounters.

The maps and handouts also deserve a special mention - Charles Elliott has excelled himself - many of the buildings have illustrations of the front elevation, while the handouts simply ooze atmosphere and suspense.

The conclusion to the adventure should provide more than a few tense moments for the players, not to mention a shock or two. But I'm not to going to give any more than that away... except to say that the adventure certainly ends with a bang!

Phil Gallagher



This book forms the third part in Games Workshop's re-issue of the *Runequest* roleplaying game; the result being a polished and exciting trilogy of RPG hardware.

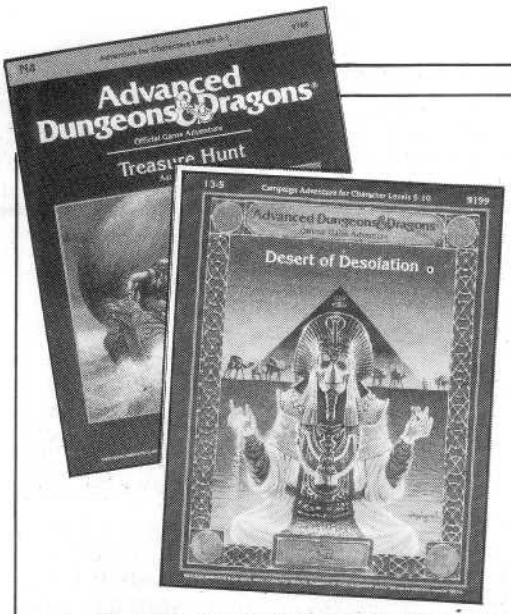
Of course, RuneQuest being what it is and Games Workshop being what *it* is, the similarity between this and any other game stops right there. **RuneQuest Monsters** is as different from the run-of-the-mill creature catalogue as it is possible to be.

It contains a complete listing of *all* the creatures that appeared in the front-line Avalon Hill products - namely the old Standard and Deluxe editions, and the ill-fated *Monster Coliseum*. It features creatures from the Gloranthan mythos - such as the dragonnewt - alongside familiar roleplaying opponents like the orcs and trolls. There are many natural creatures, and several which will provide more of a challenge than the normal fight; It also has a very large section dedicated to that most vicious of all beasts - man.

The presentation couldn't be better. There are 112 pages, many in glorious technicolour, and 120 illustrations. These make the book a pleasure to own. To make it a pleasure to use, the book also comes with many of the creatures already 'rolled up' as typical examples, as well as presented in the normal form of score ranges for each attribute. So, the book is instantly useable - providing a lively lion or a sneaky snake for that moment when you fall back on a random encounter to help things along.

The tables that allow you to work out the allocation of hit points to various parts of the body on creatures with more than the human allocation of arms, legs, etc have been thoughtfully included. So, the book doubles up both as a useful long-term reference tool, and as an immediately useable game aid.

Paul Cockburn



I3-5 DESERT OF DESOLATION

AD&D Adventure TSR £9.95

In **I3-5 Desert of Desolation**, TSR continue their policy of reprinting old adventures. However, *I3-5* is more than a simple repackaging of the three original adventures - it has been reworked to fit it into TSR's new campaign setting - the *Forgotten Realms*. The adventure material itself has received considerable expansion. It is now compatible with the *Wilderness Survival Guide* rules, for example - resulting in a 128 page adventure booklet, a 16 maps page booklet and a large A1 sheet of maps and handouts.

The action involves a 5th-10th level party in a series of adventures based in the Desert of Desolation. These adventures are classic stuff and have stood the test of time well. They mix roleplaying, wilderness and dungeon adventuring in an entertaining and intriguing way. While the roleplaying is fun, and the wilderness adventures certainly have the feel of being in a dry and dusty desert, it is the dungeon adventure sections which really shine. These are some of the best TSR has ever produced - they include tricks, traps and combat, all the stuff associated with dungeons. But more importantly, they are connected by an epic storyline which really catches the flavour of the Arabian Nights.

Great happenings are taking place: an ancient prophecy is about to come to fruition and it will change the face of the desert forever. But the prophecy involves the actions of certain outsiders, so, enter the adventurers who must struggle to overcome the great forces arrayed against them.

From the city of Bralizzar they venture forth into the dry wasteland to play their part in the prophecy. During the course of their adventure, they journey to the sunken city of Pazar and from there to the haunted tomb of an ancient pharaoh. Wall inscriptions in the pharaoh's pyramid add to the adventure and give the players an insight into what's happening. They also pose an interesting problem, as they first need to be deciphered. Although written in English, their meanings are cunningly disguised, so some thought will be required to interpret them correctly.

At the Oasis of the White Palm the adventurers must rely on their roleplaying skills to deal with the problems facing them. A mystery must be solved before they can progress any further, but once this is done, the action really hots up and in more ways than one! Finally the adventure takes them to the burial place of an ancient sorceror. Another dungeon, but a very interesting one.

It's good to see these classic adventures back in print. If you missed out first time round, make sure you catch them this time. These are easily the best of TSR's reprint series.

Jim Bambra

TREASURE HUNT

AD&D adventure
TSR
£4.95

And now for something completely different... an AD&D adventure for zero-level characters. That's right, zero-level!

The thinking behind this is simple; instead of starting your AD&D character on his/her career as an adventurer, set a scenario for your character to evolve into that role. The DM makes alignment checks, notes of how characters behave in role-playing, with magic and in combat, and keeps a record of how the character is developing - towards being a fighter, a cleric or whatever.

During this adventure, the characters will become first-level by evolving from the actions of the players. And they will need to be resourceful in their choice of action, because the characters start off as slaves in a galley with no weapons, no money, no nothing! But after a shipwreck, their freedom gradually develops and they can make meaningful choices which will help determine their final career.

The plotline is guided but not obtrusively so. One of author Aaron Allston's best innovations is an extensive section for the GM of the 'What if they do/don't do this?' variety - very useful indeed. There is an emphasis on roleplaying, careful observation, planning, and sensible negotiation, all of which is refreshing. And it's so beautifully simple. As a first adventure for initiates, this can't be beaten. For old hands who may be tiring of AD&D, it will be a welcome change.

The pregenerated characters have statistics which are too weak in most cases - but again, Allston tackles this stat problem ('If I've got good strength then I must be a fighter, mustn't I?') by avoiding excessive scores and suggesting doubling up better scores on combinations, leaving options open for character evolution.

This is a goodie: well-crafted (high quality paper, too) and truly creative. Well worth a look even if you don't normally buy AD&D adventures; you won't be disappointed.

Carl Sargent

CHASE

Boardgame
TSR £7.95

Hmmm. Nice bit of packaging... Stylish. Inside: one rule book, one board and twenty dice. No counters, cards, or other gamey bits, which all sounds a bit disappointing, but it isn't. This is **Chase**.

Chase is an abstract boardgame of brilliant simplicity from TSR. It's also one of the hardest games to play well that I've come across. As for there being no pieces, the entire game *is* right there in the box - the dice are the pieces! So how's it all work?

The game is played on an hexagonal grid; the number on the upper face of each die is the number of hexes it can move, (this can change during the game). All moves have to be in straight lines, and mustn't be blocked by any other pieces. If you land on an opposing piece you can take it off the board. All this sounds deceptively simple, but you have to move a piece exactly its movement allowance, which can pose all sorts of tactical problems when enemy pieces are the 'wrong' distance away...

When one of your bits gets captured a sort of 'conservation of movement' law comes into operation. You have to add its movement points to another of your pieces. All of a sudden, there are fewer of your pieces on the board, but the ones you have got can move further, providing their paths aren't blocked. And because long paths are often blocked, or put pieces in dangerous positions for the next turn, making a good move becomes a real teaser.

There are remarkably few 'chrome rules', but those present are very clever. You can 'bump' your own pieces, move off one edge of the board and on at the opposite side, or richocet off the top and bottom edges. Pieces can even swap movement points. All these little extras lead to some very sneaky changes of pace in the game, especially when you discover an 'impossible' move: bouncing off one end of the board, wrapping round one edge, and then bumping one of your own pieces, knocking it into one of your opponent's bits for an unexpected capture!

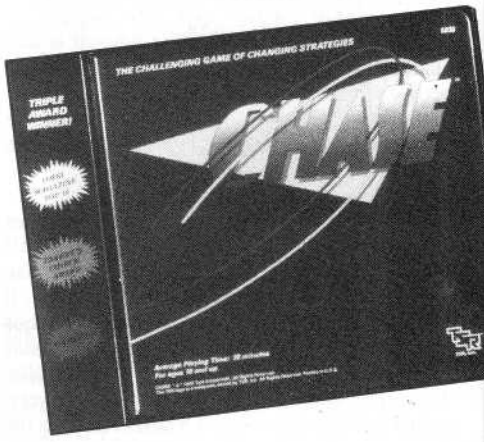
And then there's the Chamber. Move onto that with a piece and it splits, emerging as two pieces, each with half the original's movement value (which is how you get bits back into the game).

Eventually, though, someone has to win. You have to keep 25 movement points on the board at once, which means having at least 5 dice on there (4 x 6 = 24: you've lost). And the total playing time is likely to have been less than 30 minutes.

Chase fulfills that classic selling blurb for games - 'minutes to learn; a lifetime to master'. That's rare enough to be worth telling people about. *Chase* has all the good features I'm looking for in a game: it's quick, has attractive components, simple rules, and intriguing tactical problems. It's pure tactics and skill - I lose at least as often as I win, but I keep playing.

Chase was deservedly in *Omni's* Top Ten games when it was released, no bad recommendation in itself. It also gets a highly recommended here.

Mike Brunton



AWESOME L · I · E · S

Way too much fun...

The Games Workshop Design Studio is bulging at the seams with new things going on.

Small, but perfectly formed, **Rick Priestley** the man of whom it has been said but never proven, is rumoured to be working on some siege rules for **Warhammer**. Our reporter wasn't able to get past the chevaux-de-frise across the door of his office to find out more, but in another corner of the studio **Bob Naismith** was heard to mutter something about 'plastic siege bitties, ye ken'...

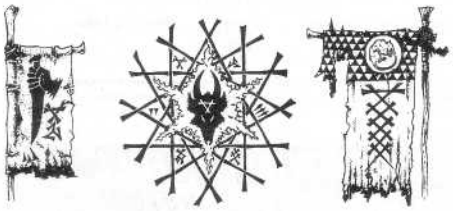
And that's not all on the battle front. To follow GW's re-release of **Stormbringer**, we hear, will be **Mournblade**, a **Warhammer** supplement covering the world of Elric. **Jim Bambra** claims to be but one aspect of the Eternal Game Designer.

Not content with that, GW are starting a **Warhammer Register**. So if you've run out of worthy opponents, or want to get in touch with other **Warhammer Fantasy Battle** gamers in your area, have a look at the ad elsewhere in this issue.

Meanwhile, **Stephen Hand** is working on **Dragon's Tower**. Not a lot of people know this, but there is apparently a thriving fantasy games industry in the frozen North, and *Drak Borgen* is one of Sweden's most popular fantasy boardgames. GW saw a copy, and were so impressed that they got the licence to produce an English translation. It's a game of exploration and adventure for one to four players, with a board that is never the same two games running, and is a good solo game to boot. Steve's latest creation, **Chaos Marauders**, is now almost ready, and it is rumoured that it will involve lots of cards covered with John Blanche artwork. Drool...

But there's more! What a busy little bee Steve is - his **Dracula** boardgame has just been entered on the GW production schedule after some very enjoyable playtests. One player is Dracula, returned some seven years after Stoker's novel, and the other players have to track him round Europe, dodging the traps and minions he leaves in his wake, and do the job properly this time. More news as we get it.

Those **Citadel** chappies haven't been letting the grass grow under their feet, either. **Regiments of Renown** due out in the next couple of months include Imperial Dwarfs and armoured Orcs, and there are new releases of Skaven and Elves in the pipeline, tailored to the *Ravening Hordes* army lists.



And welcome to **Mark Copplestone**, who has joined Citadel after previously working for Dixon's Miniatures. Look out for his work in future releases. Joining the team for the summer holidays are illustrator **Stephen Tappin** (see *Illuminations* on p84) and figure painter **Andy Pritchard** - welcome to them, too.

Finally, the Design Studio bade a tearful farewell to **Ken Rolston**, who returned to the US in July, leaving the first draft of *Way Too Many Dead Guys* (aka *Something Rotten in Kislev*, aka *Harvest of Death*, aka *Dead Guys on Parade*) behind him. We're told that working with Ken has been, to use his own phrase, 'way too much fun', and he'll be missed. Meanwhile, the ripping and tearing and red ink on his work will start as soon as *City of the White Wolf* and *Power Behind the Throne* are finished, and it is hoped to release it in early '88.

The *Judge Dredd Companion* is almost complete now, according to editor/compiler Marc Gascoigne, and will contain two adventures - in addition to Richard (*Slaughter Margin, Rogue Trooper, Block Mania* Halliwell's *Fear and Loathing in Mega-City One*, reported last month, there will be *Channel 9 Crime Time Special* by Pete Tamlyn. Other contributors include WD-JD regulars Hugh Tynan and Marcus Rowland. More news as we get it.

The Glittering Prizes

Congratulations to **Neal Schlaffer** of GW US. He won first and second prizes in the figure painting contest at Origins '87, with a Citadel *Gothic Horror* range arctic adventurer and a Citadel *Judge Dredd* riot police set respectively. All figures were painted with *Citadel Colours* paints. The judges were from Ral Partha, Grenadier and Origins staff - a tough bunch to impress, so well done Neal!

Bashin' All Over the World

After WD91's mention of an Italian games convention, things are happening everywhere:

STARD 10 is a major roleplaying convention organised by Citadel West Germany and ZauberZeit magazine, taking place in Hamburg on September 12th. The registration fee is 10DM, and there may be some places left if you're quick. Contact Karl Piotrowski, Citadel Verlag, Muhlendamm 41-43, D-2000 Hamburg 76 (phone 040-22 95 877).

Blade & Bullet '87 is the name of a live-action event, also on September 12th. Sponsored by a Luton promotional newspaper, it's believed to be the first of its kind, covering all periods and styles of live-action gaming. For details, write to the Businessman's Observer, 1A Empress Road, Luton, Beds LU3 2RE.

BASHCON '88 sounds like a quiet, thoughtful roleplaying convention. Run by the University of Toledo Benevolent Adventurers' Strategic Headquarters, it will take place at the University of Toledo on March 4th-6th 1988, with all sorts of attractions and Steve Jackson (US, not UK) as guest of honour. For details contact the Student Activities Office, UT-BASH, BASHCON, 2801 W. Bancroft St, Toledo, OH 43606, USA.

More Scurrilous Rumours...

Following the mention of trouble in store for **New Infinities** last month, more rumours have reached us. This may or may not be true, but it is rumoured that TSR have extended their injunction on NI's first release, so that they can produce the module themselves.

Frankie Goes To GW

We have heard whispers from above that GW are discussing a retail franchise operation to commence in 1988. The possibilities are tremendous! You never know you could be seeing a GW Store on your local high street!!!

More New Stuff

West End Games have announced the release of **Soldiers**, a game of man-to-man combat in World War II, to add to their already impressive list of historical military games. **Avalon Hill**, meanwhile, have **Quest for the Ideal Mate** among their winter '87 releases. One for the Mills & Boon market?

TSR have a lot lined up for the latter part of the year. As well as the role-playing material mentioned last issue, they are getting more and more heavily into gamebooks - AD&D gamebooks 14 and 15 are due out in August and November, and there are three **Car Wars** gamebooks due between now and the end of the year, as well as two **MSH** gamebooks, featuring the X-Men and Spider-Man, a One-on-One gamebook set in the **Dragonlance** world of Krynn, and two more **Top Secret** gamebooks, set in China and Moscow. Phew!

And that's not all - but more next month.

CRITICAL MASS

A regular book review column, written by Dave Langford

Sucking Them In

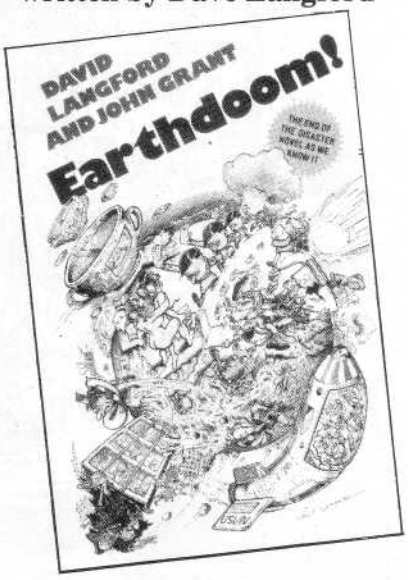
Recently I made the mistake of peeping into a forthcoming John Crowley novel. Just glancing at the three-page prologue couldn't do any harm, I thought... Hours later, your reviewer returned to reality with two grudges: (a) against Crowley's *Aegypt* for being instantly, horrifically addictive, and (b) against virtually everything else *not* being immediately compulsive reading.

One writer who can suck you in is Lucius Shepherd, whose **Green Eyes** (Grafton 332pp £3.50) opens with a serious SF interpretation of the zombie myth. Modified graveyard bacteria revive the newly dead via 'transcriptional processing of the corpse's genetic complement'... a resurrection doomed to be short-lived as the bacteria consume the brain, burn down the optic nerve in a flare of bioluminescence: green eyes. Our 'zombie' hero predictably escapes from the research necropolis, but thereafter Shepherd's plot keeps twisting away from the expected, into weird realms. In a lushly corrupt Southern US landscape, the psychic aspects of the technical miracle emerge, with developing talents of healing and perception better understood through voodoo cultists' rancid traditions. It's a richly strange, decaying world that you see through those green eyes.

Pat O'Shea's 'junior' fantasy **The Hounds of the Mórrigan** (Puffin 469pp £2.95) is high-spirited fun from the start despite being a bit heavy on the italics. The story is a long, straightforward chase with two kids pursued across real and mythic Ireland by agents of that local bitch-goddess the Mórrigan, helped in their travels by an engaging series of talking beasts and deities in mufti. I liked the Napoleonic earwig: 'If I have to be loony to be great - adieu, sanity; ze cost is but a trifle.' The comic-whimsical flavour recalls Masefield's *The Midnight Folk*; inept minions try to lure our hero to a fall by the somewhat elementary stratagem of erecting signs saying 'THIS IS A VERY SAFE ROAD. A BOY CAN CYCLE ON IT WITH HIS EYES SHUT... TRY IT TODAY.' Things become steadily grimmer as the Mórrigan herself takes a hand, and there's plenty of inventive excitement before the end. A little kitchen-sinkish in its determined ransacking of Irish myth, but fun for young and old alike.

Richard Grant's **Saraband of Lost Time** (Bantam 327pp £2.50) seems to go with M John Harrison's reissued **A Storm of Wings** (Unwin 189pp £2.95). Both have a similar feel, with eccentric and rarely loveable characters pursuing chaotic courses in the decadence of a once high-tech society. Harrison was first in this field: *Storm* marks his transition from near-traditional science fantasy to oblique metaphysics. An apparent invasion of alien locusts proves to be something subtler, the arrival of a world-view incompatible with humanity's, and the philosophical infection of people who start seeing through multifaceted eyes. Fortunately, as in *The War of the Worlds*, this cuts both ways...

Harrison opens with terribly clotted prose (favourite words of the book: gamboge, nautiloid, mucoid, litharge) and *Saraband* is much more inviting. Grant's exoticism is diluted, his characters closer to the believable. What is the Overmind, that ultimate jewelled plot device created by a vanished civilization? We are never



actually told outright, but obliquely all is revealed. The multi-sided power struggle has a nice flavour, as of civil servants in Gormenghast, and the hopelessly inadequate King is hilarious. Critics prefer *Storm*'s literary echoes and clever bits; but for all its excessive length, more readers are likely to finish *Saraband*.

Piers Anthony starts interestingly in **Wielding a Red Sword** (Grafton 368pp £2.95), fourth of his uneven 'Incarnations of Immortality'. Mym, proud Hindu prince and super-warrior, is maneouvred into the spiritual civil service as Incarnation of War (previous books starred Death, Time and Fate), and as usual in this series, Satan hopes to take evil advantage of the new incumbent. The action is jerkily episodic and the ending a trifle hasty and contradictory, as though Anthony were typing faster than the speed of logic, but *Sword* lacks the major embarrassments of its two predecessors. What dissatisfies is the introduction of tantalizing conflicts which aren't developed. How can a devout Hindu begin to accept Anthony's massively Christian heaven and hell? No credible answer emerges.

Don't miss **Other Edens** edited by Christopher Evans and Robert Holdstock (Unwin 237pp £2.95), a collection of 14 new British SF/fantasy stories, containing excellent stuff by nifty authors from Aldiss to Watson. Me too, but you needn't read that one. Which reminds me: though I didn't write the opening of the famous collaboration **Earthdoom!** by me and John Grant (Grafton 303pp £2.95), it soon improves no end and becomes a richly lyrical study of how parodying the disaster-novel genre can swell authors' bank accounts. Could this be the finest book ever written? I confidently leave the answer to you.

For those who take horror seriously, there's no better craftsman than Ramsay Campbell. **Cold Print** (Grafton 365pp £2.95) collects his Lovecraft-influenced stories over a period of twenty years. A disarming introduction quotes hysterically overwritten first drafts 'It cannot be that abomination which I met in the nitrous vaults below Asquith Place!'... The stories show Campbell's development, from the very routine eldritch dread of 'The Church in High Street', via the midpoint of the title story's incidental use of a Forbidden Book to give a nasty porn-fancier his come-uppance, to the fine 'The Voice of the Beach'. In this last tale, a complete abandonment of the standard, all too spoofable Mythos props brings Campbell full circle to the interesting part of Lovecraft's incoherent vision: a universe of vast uncaring entities who may happen to wither our minds, but like editors are fundamentally uninterested in us.

The Alternate Asimovs (Grafton 349pp £3.50) should delight any new SF writer. It comprises the original drafts of three Asimov stories, *Pebble in the Sky, End of Eternity* and 'Belief', as rejected even by pulps like *Startling Stories*. The prologue to the original *Pebble* is so excrutiatingly awful (as Asimov himself now agrees) that one can imagine it being rejected before the editor reached page two. Keep your dreadful unsaleable manuscripts for 40 years, goes the encouraging message, and Grafton will give you big money for them...

Other reissues: **The Mirror of her Dreams** by Stephen Donaldson (Fontana 658pp £2.95) is the author's most straightforward fantasy but ends with a whopping cliff-hanger. Robert Silverberg's **To Live Again** (VGSF 231pp £2.95) reads well, a witty thriller where the Macguffin is a tycoon's mind and all the characters want its personality for their own. **Victim Prime** by Robert Sheckley (Methuen 203pp £2.50) is mostly a jaded rehash of old Sheckley themes. Jack Vance's **Trullion: Allasor 2262** (Grafton 229pp £2.95) combines space-piracy with the very implausible sport 'hussade' (like a team version of 'kosho', if you remember *The Prisoner*).

After Joy Chant's pleasant retelling of British myths from the *Mabinogion* and elsewhere, in **The High Kings** (Unwin 200pp £3.50), I lost patience with the backlog of routine fantasies. They failed the first-chapter test. I was not sucked in. You might be: 'Jonathan Wylie's' **The First Named** (Corgi 351pp £2.95) and **The Centre of the Circle** (Corgi 351pp £2.95) are Irishly followed by Kenneth C Flint's **Champions of** and **Masters of the Sidhe** (both Bantam £2.50). Lawrence Watt-Evans offers **The Seven Altars of Dusarra** and **The Sword of Bheleu** (both Grafton £2.95): 'Once more, Garth the overman rode his warbeast into the decaying fontier town...' Kathleen Herbert's **Ghost in the Sunlight** (Corgi 335pp £2.95) looks quite a high-class novel of dark-age Britain, while Elizabeth Scarborough's **The Unicorn Creed** (Bantam 340pp £2.95) explores the searing dilemma of a unicorn whose virgin captor is having second thoughts about this virginity lark. Other blazingly original titles are **The Wizards and the Warriors** and **The Wordsmiths and the Warguild** (both Corgi £2.95) by Hugh Cook, whose next book is not **The Wizard and the Warlord** (Corgi 332pp £2.50) by Elizabeth H Boyer.

There are more, but even the titles are curiously soporific...

Dave Langford

WELL 'ERE'S DA REST OV DA ZOGGIN' KOMP-ET-ZOGGIN-TISHUN STUFF! 'TS NOT ARF ZOGGIN RUDE!
GOOKISH GRIN - JULIAN MERRIMAN
YOO YUNG GOBLINZ GOTTIT REAL EAZY NOWADAYZ... LIKE, EVRY TIME.....
...A COME'D ALONG 'ERE A YOUSTA BE LOBBED ON BY BANDITE.
YERK!
...AN EV'RY TIMEZ I WENT THROO 'ERE I ADTER DODGE DEM FALLIN' ROCKZ!
...SHOR DAD! YOUZE IZ LUCKY!
EEK!
HOW GOOK! WHY'A CALLED GOBBLED GOOK? 'TS DAFT!
GOBBLED! GOBBLED! GOBBLED!
DUNNO!
NEARLY WINNUR - NEIL COCKER
AN DIS BRIDGE!... GORBLIMEY!... DA NUMBERA TIMES A NEELY...
..FEIL THROO A 'OLE!
HRMPH!.. 'N A NEVER 'AD NOONE TER LOOK APTER ME LIKE YOUZE!...
UH!
...SO WHY'Z IT DAT YOU GOT NO BOOTZ LIKE ME'Z...
...SO'Z A KAN PICK ME NOSE WIVOUT LIFTIN A FINGA!
GOOKISH GRIN - MARK PWIDZICK
PSHHHT!.... THERE'S SOMETHING COMING!
WHENNA GETCHA, GONNA EATCHA! A'M WHEN A GETCHA AM GONNA...
WHEN A GETCHA A'M GONNA EATCHA!
WHEN A GETCHA A'M GONNA EATCHA!
PICK
PICK
PICK
NEARLY WINNUR - D.F. SHAW
'N DESE'RE 'BOUT WIMMIN! ...NUFF ZED!.. ROYT! AM GANNIN! GOZ OFF! SEE YA!
GOOKISH GRIN - MICHAEL ROBINSON
HELLA! HELLA! GET ME DOWN FROM HERE!
UH? OH! OK DEN!
D'ERE Y'ARE!
FLUMP!
UGALUGALUGA! WOOD JA LOOK IT DAT!
SSSSLLUURRP!
...TO BEAT, BITE, KICK, AND FIGHT?
YOWZA!
COME ON GOBLINZ! KISS ME!
EULUGH!
ZOP!
WELL ITZ AN IMPROVEMENT... ANYWAY!
TARRRP!
T-UPPINGTON
NO NO YER CAN'T GO TER DA BATTLE 'N LEAVE ME ALONE BUT!
YOR DRUNK!
BOOM!
D'YA LIKE MA PURDY KAT DEN, GOOK??
WHERE'S NIBL GONE? ....ITS! WAURRGHT
ZOG OFF!
BIL
GOOKISH GRIN
NEARLY WINNUR - HADMAR WEISER (HE'S FROM AUSTRIA!)

THRUD THE BARBARIAN

THE OMINOUS, HULKING FORM OF OF AN INTERGALACTIC BATTLE CRUISER APPROACHES A SMALL BLUE PLANET IN A DISTANT BACKWATER OF A REMOTE GALAXY

RIGHT MEN, THIS IS IT, THE FINAL PART OF YOUR TRAINING, SURVIVE THIS AND YOU WILL INDEED BE WORTHY OF THE BADGE OF THE MOST FEARED REGIMENT THIS SIDE OF THE COSMOS — THE IMPERIAL SPACE MARINES!

© CARL GRITCHLOW

THESE WERE MEN WHO HAD FACED THE GIANT WHITE APES OF BAZOOM...

...FOUGHT NEXT TO THE INFAMOUS 'LEGION OF DEATH' AT THE BATTLE OF FORD DEEP...

AND ATE THREE SHREADED WHEAT FOR BREAKFAST EVERY MORNING!

BUT NOW THEY FACED THE ULTIMATE TEST OF THEIR ABILITIES AS THE TOUGHEST MEN IN THE GALAXY!

THE HOBBIT'S ARMPIT

OK MEN – ANY SECOND NOW!

LAST ORDERS!

KZUNCH

OUTSIDE...

DOES THIS MEAN WE'VE FAILED SIR?

'COURSE NOT – YOU'RE THE FIRST ONES TO COME OUT ALIVE IN THREE YEARS!

GETTING·AWAY FROM·MOST·OF·IT

An AD&D Tournament Adventure for 5 characters of levels 2-4

by James Wallis

PLAYERS' INTRODUCTION

After handing over half your hard-won treasure to the tax man as your payment of the rich tax and then half of what you had left as the Poor Tax, you pause on your way to your inn, the Wooden Leg, to gaze through the window of the Travel Agent. Through the thin film of dried orc's blood on your visor, the pictures of sun-drenched beaches covered with sun-drenched bodies look incredibly enticing. It's only fair, you decide. You deserve a break.

You enter ye shoppe, still open at this late hour. As if by magic the shopkeeper appears, a wizened old man with a silly hat and a friendly face. 'A holiday, sire?' Yes, you say. But where? Harad? Not enough sea. R'lyeh? Too much sea. The Solomani Rim? Too far. Kadab? Too unpredictable. Lakefront City? Wrong time period. Aegis (pronounced Ay-gees), pearl of the Western Isles, jewel in a silver sea, where the water flows like wine and the sun shines every day except when it doesn't?

You nod happily as the kindly old shopkeeper fills out forms, and then you see the price. You scream politely and attempt to leave the shop but the door appears to have vanished. 'Pecuniary problems?' booms the shopkeeper, the words suddenly hissing around his new inch-long fangs and echoing down from three or four feet above your heads. 'In that case you have a choice. Either you default and forfeit your souls or...' and you instantly decide to accept the second option, whatever it is, '...you can do me a little favour in Aegis.

'Word has reached me that an artifact of much power has returned once more to the place of its manufacture and your forthcoming holiday, the lovely coastal town of Aegis. It's a pinkish stone cylinder, about ten inches long, bearing a wonderful and arcane inscription within it. If you can find it and bring it back with you - well, I'll reduce the cost of your trip to a more acceptable level.'

You agree with this and the travel agent of chaos thrusts mountains of papers into your

Illustrated by Euan Smith

hands. 'You leave in five seconds...three, two ONE!' and he smites the floor with his gold-tipped ebony staff. There is a crash, a burst of smoke and the ground rocks. 'Just minor turbulence' mutters a distant voice. The smoke fades and you find yourself in the middle of *Somewhere Else*. Worse, all your comfortable armour has disappeared, to be replaced with tasteless shorts and shirts bearing legends such as 'Mine parents went to Pavis and all they didst bring me was this lousy garment'. Clearly, this holiday is going to be no picnic.

GAMEMASTER'S INTRODUCTION

For those who haven't met one before, here's a brief introduction to tournament adventures. They are the only way that an *AD&D* game can be 'won'. They're tests of the role-playing ability of a number of players to find out who is the 'best'. The object is not necessarily to get experience points, as in normal *AD&D*, but to simply finish the adventure within the allotted time period. There are serious tournaments and less serious tournament adventures. This is one of the latter.

Tournaments are not designed to be worked into an existing campaign or to be played with existing characters. Why not? Well, the fatality rate is pretty high for a start - a very good test of role-playing ability is to see how many death traps you can avoid. Playing with pre-generated characters also lets the tournament writer create situations designed expressly for those characters. Five such characters are given at the end of this adventure, along with a simple scoring system.

The idea of this adventure is for the players to find and then take the artifact back to the Travel Agent of Chaos (actually the minor demon Kuoni) *within two hours*. That's two hours of real time, not two hours of game time. Will they succeed in finding the Rock, or will they get charged an arm and a leg for their holiday? And we mean literally an arm and a leg... Well, that's up to you.

First of all, read the *Players' Introduction* to the players before you give out the character sheets, so they know what they're going to be up against before they choose spells and so on. Then allow half an hour for the players to get organised before starting to run the adventure.

Although the characters have lost their armour at the start of the adventure, they will still have all their other equipment including weapons and magic items. They also still have the papers that Kuoni gave them; these will prove crucial later. Don't remind them about the papers unless they've obviously forgotten completely.

Each of the characters in this little package tour has got one individual objective that they must try to fulfil while in Aegis. These goals are outlined on their character sheets, but a brief resume follows. Points should be awarded for succeeding in their objectives, or at least trying hard. The notes in italic text are what the characters don't know and shouldn't be told.

Vortigern the Druid must do his utmost to get a suntan. *This means not only exposing as much of his body to the sun as much as possible, but exposing it to other sources of heat and light - like fireballs. Only a genuine tan is acceptable. Make-up or dirt is no good.*

Dymphna the Thief must try to collect souvenirs of her wonderful trip to Aegis. *Wherever possible, give points for souvenirs that are (a) specific to Aegis (b) very expensive (or illicitly obtained) and (c) gloriously tacky and/or kitsch. The more, the better.*

Fuggles the Fighter is out to get gloriously, horribly drunk. And throw up. And get drunk again. And throw up again. Ad infinitum. *Every time the character has a drink, he must save versus his Constitution minus the number of drinks he's had since he last threw up. Failure means he has to throw up within five minutes or be violently sick down the front of his shirt. Give points for embarrassing accidents at appropriate moments (eg all over the Mayor's shoes) and for the volume drunk. If he throws up more than six times, he passes out.*

Hamann the Magic-User wants to have a holiday romance - or two. No member of the opposite sex (except Dymphna who is otherwise occupied) should be ignored in this quest for fulfilment. *Hamann also has the lowest charisma in the party and attractive womenfolk will, if available, inevitably fall for another member of the group - probably the celibate Fanfaron. Give points for determination, diligence and interesting chat-up lines. Very interesting chat-up lines should be passed on to the author of this adventure.*

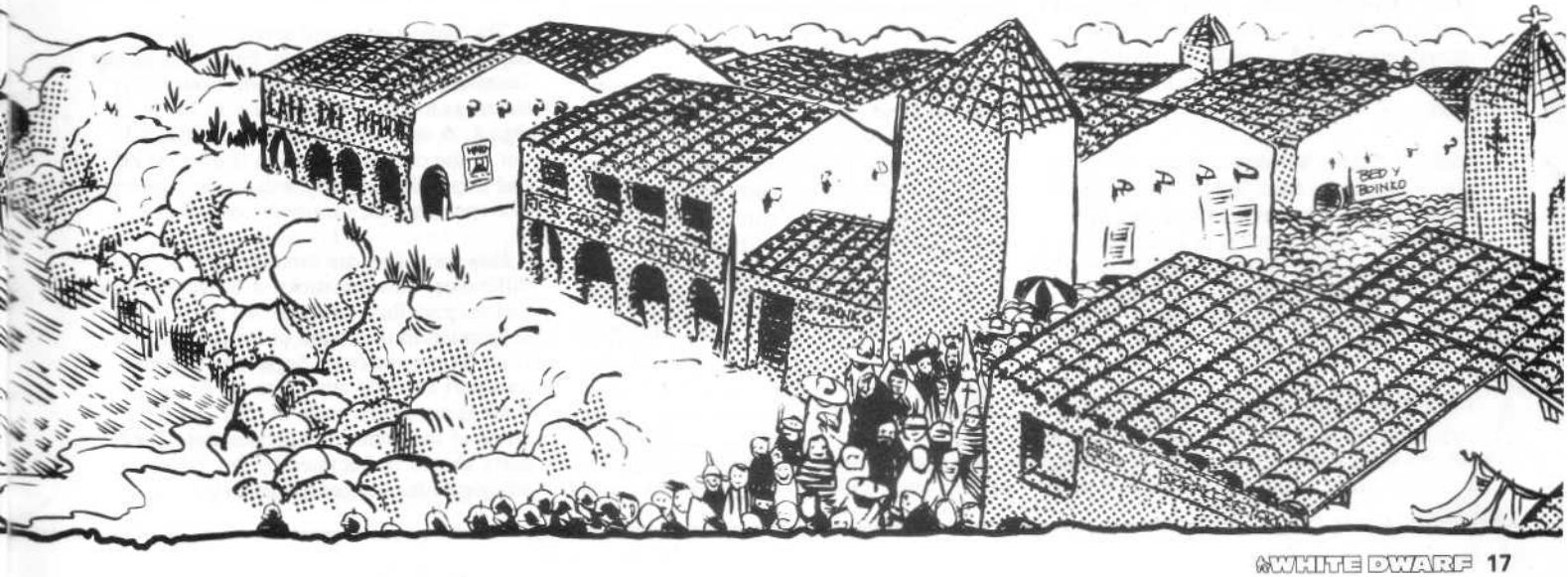
Fanfaron the Paladin thinks of himself as the explorer in an uncivilised land. He spends his time commenting loudly on the natives' disgusting habits, strange clothes, strange foods and insulting the poor Aegisans generally. *Give points for being patronising, talking to natives very slowly and loudly so they can understand him and generally being totally obnoxious.*

The artifact that the players are searching for is called the Rock of Aegis, although the players won't be aware of this name for a while. Its exact purpose has been lost in the mists of time but meanwhile it looks a lot like a stick of seaside rock, and tastes of peppermint.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

The cloud of smoke is whipped away by a brisk wind and the party find themselves standing on a stark hill top. Behind and below them is a large bustling town, its roofs and spires shining, and behind that lies the sea with a few ships rocking lazily at anchor in the harbour, its surface rippled by the breeze. The broad beach seems mostly deserted and a pier stretches invitingly towards a large island some furlongs out to sea, with a ruined fort perched picturesquely on it. In front of them is a massive building seemingly carved from a single block of stone. Above the gaping doorway, an unknown hand has tastefully arranged pink scallop shells to form the message 'SEAVIEW HOTEL'. Oh, and it's pouring with rain. Welcome to Aegis.

The players can either be stupid and start walking towards the town (in which case you have to stop them) or be reasonably intelligent and go into the hotel (see section (2)) or be really bright and look through the papers that Kuoni gave them. However, they'll have to get under cover first or the



papers will get all wet and icky and the ink will run all over their fingers and stuff.

The Papers

There appears to be an immense pile of paper - three or four reams worth of ex-tree and squid spit. A determined search takes everyone about fifteen minutes and uncovers the following items of interest:

Reservations for four (4) single rooms at the Seaview Hotel, Aegis.

An advertising brochure for said hotel - 'A brief ten minute sprint from the beach, the Seaview boasts a luxury sun lounge, spacious bar with fine stock of liqueurs from around the world, giftshoppe, restaurant where our lovely waitresses will be happy to serve you...'

A badly dog-eared guide book. See just below.

The Holidaymaker's Guide To Aegis

The guide book is set out with an index and articles on specific subjects. Characters cannot browse through it, but must look up the subject that they want to find out about - in other words, tell you exactly what they want to know about. If they're too vague then tell them there's no entry; likewise if they're too specific then the book simply doesn't have information that precise. If their question is irrelevant, make up a plausible but similarly irrelevant reply. If it's a relevant topic and they call it the right thing (ie 'Rock Of Aegis' rather than 'Goofy Pink Stone Cylindrical Artifact Tasting Of Peppermint'), there should be a little section on it thereafter. Read it to the players.

Brayton's Pier: Brayton's Pier is one of Aegis's most famous tourist attractions. It's a pier, built over 100 years ago by Mr Brayton, and it's still standing today. Visit it so you can be among the thousands who have stood on the famous Brayton's Pier!

The Fisherman's Fingers: Typical of inns in so many small fishing towns, this charming tavern oozes period charm. Chat with typical local fishermen over tankards of locally-brewed StrongAle(®), while the barmaids make you feel right at home in this friendly setting.

Rock Of Aegis: An ancient stone artifact of mighty power. Its exact history and purpose has been lost in the mists of time but many local traders make replicas of it which they sell to visitors from foreign parts. Traditional folk tales say that it disappeared from the area after a visiting god made a faux pas and tried to eat it.

The Other Rock Of Aegis: Our ancestors gave this evocative title to the island with its fortress which defended the harbour of Aegis in less civilised times. In these days of peace

and harmony it has been deserted and left to crumble picturesquely into the sea. It is not to be confused with the other Rock of Aegis, because it's not pink, not cylindrical and not about ten inches long.

Seaview Hotel: The Seaview Hotel has been tastefully blended to fit in with its surroundings and overlooks the Old Towne and the picturesque Bay of Aegis. It is sure to become one of the most visited places in the area on account of the wonderful facilities it offers. A brief ten minute sprint from the beach, the Seaview boasts a luxury sun lounge, spacious bar with fine stock of liqueurs from around the world, giftshoppe and restaurant. It is due to be completed early next year.

THE HOTEL

Entering the hotel, you find yourselves in a massive lobby area that looks not unlike the inside of a marble quarry. A small gong sits atop a block of stone more reminiscent of a sacrificial altar than a reception desk. A little illuminated sign pinned to it reads 'Bang hard for attention'. Strange noises echo from various doorways - grinding, clanking, scraping, unnerving noises.

If - and only if - a character knocks seven bells out of the gong will a rather harassed young man emerge, covered in dust, from a doorway behind the desk. 'Can I help?' he asks, a horrible false grin plastered on his face. If the party produce the room reservation forms or similar, he will grin, look embarrassed, grin again and explain that the characters must have made a mistake because the hotel won't be open for another five months because it's still being built - but they'll be only too happy to take advance bookings for next year...

He will ooze false sympathy for the party's plight and can supply a fair amount of information about the tourist attractions of the local area - nothing more than the guide book, except that if the party describe the object of their quest he will give them its real name (The Rock Of Aegis, twit!). Just as the party are about to leave he asks their names, rummages in a drawer and produces a letter addressed to one of them. This reads as follows:

Dear Friends,

Since you prevailed upon me to cut the price of your holiday, I was forced to remove a few unnecessary luxuries, like accommodation. My apologies.

If people give you funny looks when you ask them about the artifact, don't worry: its aura of magic is simply doing unpleasant and probably fatal things to their minds, that's all.

Now stop fooling around and find that thrice-cursed artifact.

Have a nice day,

Your Travel Agent

The hotel desk clerk/builder gives the party a very funny look as they leave.

A TRIP DOWN TO AEGIS

A steep path leads down the hill from the Seaview Hotel to the town. It has stopped raining now and the track is rather muddy. Still, it doesn't take long before you enter the town. The streets are quiet for a famed holiday resort - but as the strains of a distant melody reach your ears, you realise why. Turning, you see three orcs stagger out of an alley singing, in slurred voices, the orcish war-chant, ''Ere we go, 'ere we go, 'ere we go...' They spot you and, with an evil grin, start running towards you chanting the battle cry 'Three-nil, three-nil, three-nil, three-nil!'

Cue Gratuitous Combat Number 1. The orcs use clubs, and their drunkenness doesn't make much difference to their fighting ability. If they're not all dead in five melee rounds, the Town Guard turn up (all five of them, in full dress uniform) and join in against the orcs. If the characters start attacking the Guard they'll fight back, if necessary to the death.

3 Orcs: AC 6; HD 1; HP 7,5,4; THAC0 19; Damage 1-6/1-3; *Treasure: One stick of Brayton's Rock* (see *The Pier*);

5 Town Guards: (3rd Level Fighters): HP 22,20,17,14,14; THAC0 19; Damage 2-8/2-12 (using Glaive-Guisarmes); AC 4 (Ornamental plate mail); Treasure *nil*.

The Town Guard will arrive whatever happens and will cart away the bodies of any deceased, all the while issuing strict warnings to any survivors Not To Do It Again. A stick of Brayton's Rock will fall out of the orc's pocket as he is dragged off and hopefully the party will pounce upon it (the rock, not the orc) with cries of glee.

However, there are three crucial differences between sticks of Brayton's Rock and the real Rock of Aegis: (1) The inscription in the centre of Brayton's Rock reads 'A present from Aegis' and will not transport anybody anywhere (2) Brayton's Rock is not really made of rock and (3) it tastes of spearmint, not peppermint. The party should be bemused by this. Move straight to the next encounter, viz:

DRINK, DRINK AND BE MERRY

Whilst brushing themselves down after their battle with the orcs, the PCs notice a nearby tavern, 'The Fisherman's Fingers'. The day is getting hot. If Fuggles' love of alcohol isn't enough to get them in there, mention that there might be someone within who knows about this pink cylindrical thing they've found.

Inside, the tavern is tacky beyond belief. Fishing nets and glass baubles adorn the walls, alongside dried starfish and empty crab shells. Most of the tables are empty, but a nervous-looking sailor sits in a corner, trying not to be noticed and quietly practising his 'Yo-ho-ho' and 'A-har me 'earties' in case he is.

Let the players do what they want - they should have a wonderful time. There's beer for Fuggles to drink, souvenirs for Dymphna to steal, women for Hamann to fall madly in love with, natives for Fanfaron to insult, and only Vortigern is left to get on with the plot. If the barmaid (mid-30s, looks late 40s, face an inch deep in make-up) is asked about the stick of rock she will tell the party that it's a common item around Aegis. This is mainly because it's made here by Master Brayton, out on the pier, so he should have any more information the party want. He doesn't, of course, but we have to get the party there somehow. That's all the 'useful' information that can be gained here but let the players muck about for as long as they like.

The only damper to this fun time will come if they ask the Gen-u-ine Localised-Type Sailor in the corner about the Rock of Aegis. He will look at them with bleary eyes and say 'Uh... dooya mean tha Rocka Aegis or tha Otha Rocka Aegis...?' Whatever they say he will give them a funny look and suddenly go berserk and attack his interrogator with another stick of Brayton's Rock that he pulls out of his pocket.

A Sailor (2nd Level Fighter): AC 9 (Oilskins); HP 11; Attacks 1; Damage 1-2/1-2. After one hit the stick of rock will shatter. The sailor will look at it and slump into an unconscious heap on the floor. The terrible influence of the Rock has struck!

When the time comes to pay for the drinks, the barmaid will look at the party's gold coins, smile broadly (causing a fine network of cracks to spread across her make-up - an effect like the surface of an old china plate) and tell the party that although, strictly speaking, the gold piece isn't legal tender in Aegis because they use tacky silvery coins called Tokens instead, she'll do them a favour and exchange all they want at the special rate of 8 tokens to 1 gold. Very generous of her, especially as the going rate is 20 tokens to 1 gold and everywhere is willing to take gold anyway.

By the way...

In case anyone in the party is feeling a little naked in their Bermuda shorts and ghastly T-shirts, there is an Armoury in the town if they want to look for it. Anything down to AC7 and shields are available off-the-peg for humans, elves and half-elves at PHB prices plus 25%. A little equipment is available but nothing very useful - buckets and spades, perhaps, but no rope or anything like that. The armourer will give the party a funny look if they ask questions about the Rock.

KIND, CHEERFUL, MERRY MR BRAYTON

The pier is around 150 yards long, made of wood and stretching out into the bay. A sign over the entry proclaims that it is 'Brayton's Pier, home of Brayton's Rock'. Entrance is 1 token each.

There are various diverting stalls along the pier - nothing too diverting although a few sell tacky souvenirs, some are staffed by attractive young women and some sell alcohol. The end of the pier, however, is completely taken up by a large plank building bearing the sign 'Brayton's Rock Made And Sold Here. Enquire within'.

Within is the factory, staffed by three halflings who make the Rock and Mr Brayton who sits in his office all day. Should the characters enter, he will rush over to them, introduce himself as Mr Brayton, owner of the factory and the pier, and will then proceed to tell His Joke, which goes 'My grandfather built the pier, and he left it to my father, and my father left it to me - you could call it a hereditary pierage!' This joke, although not funny the first time, is then repeated roughly every three minutes until the party leave the factory or are driven mad and throw Mr Brayton out of the window - which might be difficult because he's a large chap. Gargantuan.

Anyway, he's a jolly fellow and will show the characters around, giving them free samples of his wares (see the next bit) and telling His Joke again. If asked about the Rock of Aegis, he knows little but has formulated His Theory about it; which postulates that the 10 inch pink cylinder (of which his products are authentic replicas) must be connected with the 150,000 ton lump of granite with a fort on it. 'Otherwise, why would they both have the same name?'

Now that he comes to think of it, there have been some funny rumours going around the town about the Other Rock and the old fort on it. People have seen strange lights there at night, and the weather's been most unseasonal for the time of year. If anyone says, 'But the sun's shining!' Brayton will tap his nose and say, 'Exactly!' When the wind's come in from the sea, there's been a queer smell of sulphur on it. The fishermen have reported seeing large numbers of dead fish floating in the area, some with large bites taken out of them. A two-headed calf was born recently and one night everyone in the town dreamed of parsnips. There was an eclipse of the moon yesterday and people have reported seeing the Woozle in the area (for more on **Woozles**, see *New Monsters* section at the end of the adventure).

And so on, making the rumours more fantastic and ridiculous as you go. If anyone should comment that all this is a red herring, Brayton will pipe up that a shoal of them was caught last week swimming in the bay. Clearly, something odd is happening at the fort. But how to get there? Brayton, if asked, will recommend Old Horatio's boat trip around the rock, which leaves every hour from the beach.

If the players hang around too long, one of the halflings in the factory screams, 'The Other Rock!' Then he leaps out of the window and starts swimming towards the island. Brayton turns to the PCs with a funny look in his eye. 'Aye,' he says, 'There's something reet queer going on with that island.'

Brayton's Rock

The substance sold by Mr. Brayton is curious stuff. It tastes, as previously mentioned, of spearmint and is not unpleasant to eat. However, every time a character eats a lump of it, they must roll under their dexterity on d20 or get their teeth gummed up by the gooey mass of rock in their mouths. The player is then given a choice: he can *either* say nothing in character for the next 5 minutes (he may still describe his character's actions) *or* he can speak but he must do so for the next 5 minutes with (d6) dice in his or her mouth, to simulate the effect of the goo.

A fairly obvious point here is that although this part of the adventure can be extremely funny to watch (or even experience), we don't want to see a tragedy result. No harm should come to anyone if everybody behaves in a sensible manner. Don't startle or hit anyone with dice in their mouths. There is no age limit on who can choke under such circumstances.

Anyway, the number of dice in the mouth is determined after the player makes the decision, and the dice types are chosen by the DM - no d30s or d100s permitted. Who says we don't encourage new types of role-playing?

ON THE BEACH

The beach at Aegis is golden sand; the sort of sand that gets into your shoes, your sandwiches, your hair, your underwear and your mouth; not necessarily in that order. A few people are basking in the sun and little waves run up the beach. Very nice. In the distance, you see a boat pulled up onto the shore.

The boat is indeed Old Horatio's, but this little walk gives you a chance to take advantage of any interesting ideas you may have for what else is happening on the beach. And the next bit...

Sand Gets in Your Eyes

A brightly-dressed man in a straw hat approaches the PCs as they stroll along. 'Like to hire a deckchair? Bask in the life-giving rays of the sun for an hour or two?' Anyone who exchanges more than a few words with him (penalise Vortigern if he doesn't) must make a saving throw against Spells or feel compelled to pay the man two Tokens and sit down in one of the deckchairs.

This is a Grave Mistake because the man is an Agent of The Rock (read: convenient NPC to work in silly encounter) and the chairs are really *Deckchairs of Entrapment*. If anyone sits in one, it will attempt to fold up and crush the living daylights out of them (see *New Magic Item* at the end of the adventure). When the unfortunate characters have worked their way out of the chair's nightmare embrace, the Agent of the Rock will have mysteriously vanished. Walk on to Old Horatio's boat.

AAAAAARRRRRRRRRRR!

The boat leans on one side, the sailor leans on the boat and a tattered noticeboard leans against the sailor. 'Old Horatio's Sea Trips', it reads, 'A Voyage around The Other Rock of Aegis; Only five tokens per person'. The sailor smells strongly of (a) fish and (b) whiskey and appears to be asleep.

If woken, Horatio will look around and say, 'Aar.' If asked a question, he will look thoughtful, puff on his pipe and say, 'Aaaarr.' If money, or a trip is mentioned, he will say, 'Aaaaaaarrr!' and prepare to move the boat out. He will not hire the boat to anyone ('Ar') but is quite happy to ferry the party to the Other Rock ('Aaaaarr') although he offers a dire warning (and a funny look) to anyone who wants to step foot on its granite shore ('Aaaaaaaaarrrrrrr!?'). If offered money, he will take it ('Aaahaaar!') and offer no form of change if the amount was too much. He is not a great conversationalist.

It's a tight squeeze to get everyone into the boat. Old Horatio pushes it off and nimbly leaps aboard to row vigorously towards the island. After about 15 minutes a strange look comes into the old tar's eye (he's only got one) as he begins to succumb to the evil influence of The Rock and he starts to turn the boat around, back towards Aegis. He will brook no argument with this ('Aar!'). If threatened, he stands up in the boat and hits the offender with an oar. If unstopped, he will row back to Aegis, drag the boat back up the beach, lean against it and go back to sleep.

Old Horatio (3rd Level Fighter): AC 8 (thick skin and thick woolly sweater); HP 22; THAC0 18; Damage 1-6/1-6; Treasure: *A boat*

Combat in the boat is an interesting experience. Everyone involved in the fight or standing up must save vs Dexterity each round when hit by the oar, or fall overboard. Old Horatio, due to experience at this sort of thing, only has to roll 18 or less. In addition to this, the DM must roll each melee round to see if the boat capsizes. Try to get 20 or less on d20, but subtract 1 from the target for each person involved in combat or standing up. If the boat is overturned, it cannot be righted but people can cling to it for support. It will take 5 hours to drift back to Aegis.

Everyone in the boat can swim, but Old Horatio's wellies quickly fill with water and drag him to the bottom. It takes 15 minutes to swim to the Other Rock, and characters can swim one minute for every hit point they have left. If anyone starts drowning, they can be helped but the helper must use his or her own hit points to support their colleague. As an example, Bill (25 hps) could help Ben (8 hps) to get to the island, but if Janet (20 hps) wants to get to shore, she would have to leave John (9 hps) to his fate.

ROCKY

Those of the party with enough stamina left to get to the Other Rock will land on the only approachable bit; a narrow bit of rocky shore covered with a thin layer of greyish sand. In the cliff wall a few feet away is what seems to be a large cave entrance with steps visible within it. But before they can do very much other than get their breath back from the dip (or the row if they didn't manage to turn the boat wrong-way up), two horrible pale figures rise from the waves, walk ashore and attack!

They are *Lacedons*, marine ghouls under the malevolent influence of the Rock, Nasty Beasties At The Best Of Times, and You Do Not Mess With Them. Sensible option: run away. Will the party do this? Will they heck.

Lacedons: AC 6; HD 2; HP 13,7; Attacks 3; THAC0 16; Damage 1-3/1-3/1-6 plus paralysation. Treasure: *None to speak of.*

Give the survivors a minute or two to get the rest of their breath back and then report nine or ten more heads rising from the surf. If they don't run away this time (into the cave, of course), they deserve everything they get.

ROCKY II

The atmosphere inside the cave is cold and clammy. The stairs are covered with condensation and lead into the side of the rock, going straight ahead. It is dark and progress is slower than the characters would wish. The pursuers can easily be heard mounting the stairs behind them. The passage goes onwards and upwards before it flattens out and suddenly enters a wide room with windows. This is evidently the basement and storeroom of the fort, obvious from the sacks of flour and the barrels here. The passage continues on the other side of the room.

All the food is utterly rotten. If Fuggles stops to pick up a small barrel (which does contain ale: the big ones contain water) the party will shout at him for wasting time. If he doesn't, penalise him for bad role-playing. Swings and roundabouts. A reasonable barricade can be made out of these items and the barrels can be rolled down the stairs to delay the following lacedons.

ROCKY III

The passage continues with more stairs leading upwards, now visible by the light from arrow-slits in the walls. Once more the corridor flattens out and enters a room; this one smaller than the last. Stairs lead upwards from an exit on the other side of the room. It appears to be a kitchen of sorts, and a smell of raw fish assails the nostrils. A tall man with white hair stands at a table, his back to the party. He wears a knotted handkerchief on his head.

The cook will seem to be oblivious to the presence of the party unless they either approach him or try to leave. At the first sign of movement, he whirls around, brandishing a haddock. 'Don't move!' he cries, and if you can do a D P Gumby voice then do it now. 'For I have you covered with this loaded haddock. What do you wish with me, Albert Ross, Guardian of the Other Rock of Aegis?'

Albert Ross is not your everyday D P Gumby soundalike, for as a lad he discovered he had awesome powers and decided to use them to defend the Other Rock of Aegis against defilement by strangers wearing tasteless T-shirts. Albert Ross is unique, for he is the only **Were-Gannet** in existence (see *New Monsters* at the back). If the party attempt to move or make any hostile gestures, he will undergo his amazing transformation into Gannet form and will attack them, squawking loudly.

Albert Ross (Human Form) (1st Level Fighter): AC 10; HP 4; THAC0 20; Damage 1 point (a haddock isn't a very effective hand-to-hand weapon, even when loaded).

Albert Ross (Gannet Form): AC 4; HD 4; HP 26; THAC0 15; Attacks 3; Damage 1-2/1-2/1-4. Special attacks: None. Special defences: 75% magic resistance. Treasure: *a haddock.*

The players are going to have to fight their way past Albert; talking won't do any good

at all. If they seem to need a little prompting, remind them of the squelching noises echoing up the stairs behind them as oodles and oodles of hungry lacedons follow them.

ROCK OF AEGIS, CLEFT FOR ME...

Onwards they go, up the stairs, past passages leading to rooms which have crumbled into the sea, over gaps in the floor through which the roaring breakers can be seen, hundreds of feet below. Finally the passage leads into the bright open air at the top of the fortress, and the party behold an awesome sight. A mighty sword has been embedded hilt-first into the castle's stonework and impaled upon it is a ten inch long pink cylinder that seems to glow slightly, even in the sunlight. Runes are visible, graven on the sword blade

(which seems surprisingly shiny for something that's been in the open sea air for several millennia). Between you and it, however is a gaping hole in the floor, roughly ten feet across. Waves crashing on rocks several hundred feet below are clearly visible through it. Ooo-er.

Okay, okay, so according to the *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide* this jump is technically impossible (page 17 for rule freaks). But hey, if it feels good, do it! Save under Strength and Dexterity to get across: if the Dexterity roll fails then they're clinging to the edge on the far side; if the Strength roll fails then they're clinging to the edge on the near side; if both fail then it's *AAAAAAaaaaaaaarrgghh!* time, folks.

Anyone who gets across can read the runes on the sword, they read 'Whosoever can pull this rock from this sword gets to keep the rock.' It takes a total of 25 or more points of strength to get the thing off the end of the sword. However, the moment that anyone touches the rock, the lacedons rush out of the passage and proceed to attack anyone who hasn't yet crossed the gap. Two lacedons will emerge each melee round until there are 11 there. They cannot cross the gap, although some may die trying.

Lacedons (back by popular demand): AC 6; HD 2; HP 16, 14, 12, 11, 11, 10, 9, 9, 9, 5, 2; THAC0 16; Attacks 3; Damage 1-3/1-3/1-6 plus paralysation; Treasure: *Still nothing worth mentioning*.

I'M GOING HOME

So there the players are, stuck in a possibly insoluble and probably fatal position. How do they get home? Very simple; they read the inscription in the core of the rock - out loud, of course, and preferably in unison although just one person reading it will be enough to transport every party member still alive to the next and final section of the adventure. This mystical inscription cannot be read while the rock is still on the sword (because it makes for a good plot, that's why!) but once removed the hole in the rock seals magically and the inscription appears spiralling round and round the cylinder, the letters getting smaller and smaller but never becoming illegible. It reads as follows:

Away dull ache! Toby, beside thee see cyde!
Away dull ache! Toby, bestride the sea!
Away dull ache! Two's trolls a long the Promprompromprom
Where Thebe rasp and play stiddle eons pomp on...

By the end of the second line or so, someone will have caught on and will be singing along (I sincerely hope - long elaborate puns are no good unless someone knows the original). As the verse finishes there is a blinding flash and everything goes white for a predictably melodramatic instant.

THE PARTY'S OVER

Read this part to the players.

As the dazzling spots before your eyes finally fade and your vision clears, you find yourself back in the dingy little travel agent's shop where this adventure started. With a faint pop and a cloud of sulphurous fumes, the travel agent himself appears.

'Back already? I do hope you all had a most enjoyable trip. Now, did you get it?' he asks eagerly. Seeing the pink object in (whoever)'s hands, he smiles broadly; fangs gashing deep incisions in his lower lip, but he seems not to notice the green ichor dripping to the floor. He waves his right hand, the seven fingers carving occult patterns in the air, and is suddenly holding the Rock of Aegis.

He brandishes it triumphantly. 'This just covers the cost of your holiday.' He waves his left hand and is suddenly holding everything else you brought back with you. 'Surcharges.' He explains.

His hand grips the Rock and he stares at it as if it were a much loved teddy. 'The Rock...at last, it is mine! Quake with fear, you tiny fools, for you know not what havoc you have wrought to your world by doing this task for me!' Slowly he lifts it to his mouth and bites it rapturously.

'Ah! Peppermint! My favo-' and suddenly he is gone in a pink puff of sugary-sweet smoke. So is the Rock. So are all your worldly possessions. So is the shop. And suddenly you're standing, completely naked, in a muddy street as a cold drizzle falls upon your unresisting shoulders and backs.

But at least you've all got nice suntans.

VORTIGERN THE DRUID

Level 4, Male Human, aged 45, True Neutral

STR 12, INT 9, WIS 16, DEX 11, CON 7, CHA 15, 16hp, THAC0 18, AC 8

Armed with Quarterstaff (does 1-6/1-6 damage)

Spells
4 x 1st, 2 x 2nd, 2 x 3rd

Equipment
Ring of Protection+2, Staff, T-shirt reading *Druids do it in the woods*, Bottle of suntan lotion, Handkerchief, 12 gp

Saves

Paralysation, poison, death magic	7
Petrification, polymorph	10
Rod, staff or wand	11
Breath weapon	13
Spells	10

You are determined to get a good suntan while on holiday in Aegis - after all, being priests of nature, all druids should have tans but dungeon delving doesn't give you much chance to bronze your manly torso.

DYMPHNA THE THIEF

Level 4, Female elf, aged 223, True Neutral

STR 10, INT 15, WIS 9, DEX 17, CON 8, CHA 11, 12hp, THAC0 19, AC 7

Armed with *shortsword+1* (2-7/2-9)

Abilities
Pick Pockets 55%; Open Locks 42%; Find Traps 35%; Move silent 43%; Hide in shadows 40%; Hear noise 20%; Climb walls 88%; Read lang 20%

Equipment
shortsword+1, T-shirt reading *I'm with*

Stupid, Mirrored sunglasses, Flip-flops, 8 gp

Saves

Paralysation, poison, death magic	13
Petrification, polymorph	12
Rod, staff or wand	14
Breath weapon	16
Spells	15

Being something of a collector of objects, you'd like various souvenirs to remind you of this trip - a tasteful straw donkey, perhaps, or a statuette of a nymph that changes colour when it's going to rain. Anything of that ilk, so long as it will look good on your mantelpiece.

FUGGLES THE FIGHTER

Level 2, Male dwarf, aged 75, Chaotic Good

STR 18/15, INT 7, WIS 8, DEX 10, CON 17, CHA 12, 19hp, THAC0 18 (Damage rolls +4), AC 10

Armed with *Axe+1* (2-7/2-5)

Equipment
Axe+1, Large flask of strong ale, T-shirt reading *Say I'm short and I'll bite your kneecaps*, 28 gp

Saves

Paralysation, poison, death magic	14
Petrification, polymorph	15
Rod, staff or wand	11
Breath weapon	17
Spells	12

You're only going on this holiday for one reason. You want to get very, very drunk and offensive, throw up as many times as possible, fall over frequently and generally reinforce the image of dwarves as obnoxious drunks. Here we go, here we go, here we go...

HAMANN THE MAGIC-USER

Level 3, Male human, aged 39, Neutral good

STR 10, INT 17, WIS 8, DEX 15, CON 15, CHA 6, 10hp, THAC0 20, AC 8

Armed with *Dagger+1* (does 2-5/1-3 damage)

Spells
2 x 1st; 1 x 2nd

Equipment
Ring of Protection+1, Dagger, T-shirt reading *Hey Babe, wanna see my Wand of Fireballs?*, Scroll with *Fireball* and *Protection from Normal Missiles*, Sketchpad and pencil (no camera - it's not invented yet), 12gp

Saves

Paralysation, poison, death magic	14
Petrification, polymorph	13
Rod, staff or wand	11
Breath weapon	15
Spells	12

You want one thing out of this holiday - a holiday romance with a sultry foreign beauty. Not all magic users are boring scholars or power-crazed egomaniacs, and after many months underground you need a soul-mate.

FANFARON THE PALADIN

Level 3, Male human, aged 28, Lawful Good (how dare you ask!)

STR 17, INT 9, WIS 13, DEX 11, CON 15, CHA 18, 24hp, THAC0 17, AC10

Armed with Longsword (does 4-11/4-15 damage)

Equipment
Longsword, Holy symbol, T-shirt reading *When I'm good I'm very, very good but...*, 3 sp

Turning undead
Skeletons (10) Zombies (13) Ghouls (16) Shadows (19) Wights (20)

Saves

Paralysation, poison, death magic	11
Petrification, polymorph	12
Rod, staff or wand	13
Breath weapon	14
Spells	14

Quite frankly, you're not quite sure why you agreed to come on this holiday to some sweaty far-off place populated by godless heathens who don't even speak a decent language. Still, try to remain aloof, don't drink the water and maybe you won't get infected by one of their tropical plagues.

NEW MONSTERS AND MAGIC

The Woozle

Printing stats for the woozle is a bit of a waste of time, to be frank, because very few people have ever seen one and nobody has ever got close to harming one. The woozle is a much-feared harbinger of doom, famine, earthquakes, reactor meltdowns, collisions with comets, Thrud getting a bit annoyed etc, and there is never any doubt when a party has met one. They will be walking quietly along one day when from behind a large rock or tree will leap the Woozle. It is huge. It is shaggy. It looks mean. It opens its great slobbering jaws, showing row upon run of scabrous yellowed teeth, smiles ruefully, shouts 'BOO!' and runs away very quickly.

The Were-Gannet

Frequency: Mind-bogglingly rare
Hit dice: 4
Armour Class: 4
No. of attacks: 3
Damage per attack: 1-2/1-2/1-4
Special attacks: None
Special abilities: Flight
Magic resistance: 75%
Treasure: None
Alignment: Stupid

The were-gannet is a really amazingly pointless monster. It inhabits desolate places frequented by seabirds, and can converse with them rather well. However, it cannot summon them to its aid. The ability to become a were-gannet is not transmitted by virus, as normal lycanthropy is, but is a hereditary gene; so you can't become one by being bitten by one.

In combat the were-gannet attacks with its two feet and a vicious peck.

Deckchair of Entrapment

This item appears to be a perfectly normal deckchair in all respects, except that when it is sat upon, it will suddenly constrict around the sitter, causing 1d6 damage per melee round until its victim is dead; at which point it reverts to its normal shape, the corpse taking on the aspect of a sleeping sunbather. The Deckchair can be rendered immune for a melee round by a Dispel Evil spell; or it will fall to pieces if it takes over 30 hit points of damage. It cannot be burned.

TOURNAMENT SCORING SYSTEM

There is no strict point allocation for specific actions in this adventure, since different players will have different attitudes to various problems. Rather, the main perogative is survival, followed by good role-playing, followed by good team-work.

Give one point to each character that survives the encounters with the Orcs, Deckchairs, Lacedons, Gannet, and some more Lacedons...

Award anywhere between 0 and 4 points to each player for accurate and amusing role-playing.

Award between 0 and 2 points to each player for good teamwork playing.

Award between 0 and 2 points for anything else that you think deserves points.

And finally, give 2 extra points to each player that finishes the adventure within the two hours allowed for play.

Well, that seems to be everything. Good luck, and may the best humanoid win!

James Wallis

Vances Evocation of Arcane Delight

A study in Green and Purple

By Simon Nicholson

It is commonly agreed that the *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* rules system is a mish-mash, an unhappy conglomeration of too many rules and not enough regulation. Nobody plays 'straight' *AD&D*. This is, perhaps, part of its attraction: it encourages gamers to experiment with systems and formulae.

This mish-mash is also to be found in the themes of the game, whose influences include Tolkien, Moorcock, Leiber, Howard, Arthurian legend, and European Medieval history. Even the *AD&D* magic system does not escape. While ostensibly based on the magic in Jack Vance's Dying Earth stories, it is distorted by the *AD&D* elements of alignment, level, and class. This is a great shame, as Vancian Magic is too good to be watered down. Indeed, it is a great deal more interesting than the *AD&D* magic system itself.

What follows is an explanation of Vancian Magic. I hope that even those of you who do not play *AD&D* will find it interesting enough to stimulate some ideas, or perhaps encourage you to read the books themselves.

The Dying Earth

Jack Vance is the author of four books which make up the *Dying Earth* - series: *The Dying Earth, The Eyes of the Overworld, Rhialto the Marvellous*, and *Cugel's Saga*. They are fantasies set in the 21st Aeon, when the Earth is old, and an ancient red sun rides the fathomless dark blue sky. Countless civilisations have prospered and fallen in the history of the world. Countries have become empires, and empires have become dust.

Vance's stories take place in the known realms of Earth, made up of the lands of Ascolais, the Ide of Kauchique, Almery to the South, and the Land of the Falling Wall. These lands once constituted Grand Motholam, a magnificent empire of the 18th Aeon of Earth history, whose capital city was Kaiin. So wise and prosperous were the people of Grand Motholam that they have passed into legends outshining even the myths and religions of the time when the sun was yellow.

Things are not so magnificent by the 21st Aeon, however: the glorious days of Grand Motholam have long passed, remaining only in memory and story. A fraction of Kaiin remains inhabited, encircled by haunted ruins. Ascolais is a wilderness where outlaws and bandits roam freely. Monsters stalk the night: the meadows are haunted by flesh-eating deodands, the skies are home to pterosaurian pelgrane, and the forests echo with the melancholy cries of grue.

Vance's stories are pure adventures, alternating happily between comedy and tension. They are not great literature by any means, but the ideas are presented with much style and originality. They are therefore ideal sources for roleplaying games.

The Magic of Vance

At the time of the Dying Earth, Science has vanished away and Magic has arisen once more to take its place. Knowledge remains the most precious and powerful possession.

In ages gone... a thousand spells were known to sorcery, and the wizards effected their wills. Today, as Earth dies, a hundred spells remain to man's knowledge, and these have come to us through the ancient books.

At one time, Grand Motholam swarmed with sorcerers and mages, theurgists and witches. The greatest of all was the Arch-Necromancer Phandaal, whose name alone is enough to evoke awe and wonder in the 21st Aeon. Phandaal was personally responsible for one hundred spells, though it is rumoured that demons instructed him whenever he wrought magic. Pontecilla the Pious, the ruler of Grand Motholam at that time, imprisoned Phandaal for his dreadful sorceries. Phandaal was tortured and eventually killed, after which all magic was declared a corruption of nature and was outlawed. The wizards of Grand Motholam scattered and fled, taking all but a fraction of their knowledge with them.

Vancian Magic has qualities which are sadly lacking in its roleplaying counterparts: style and atmosphere. Who could forget such marvellous spells as *Thasdrubal's Laganetic Transfer*, a transportation spell; *The Spell Of Forlorn Encystment*, which imprisons the victim in a pore in the Earth's crust exactly 45 miles below the surface(!); or even *The Green And Purple Postponement Of Joy*?

Compare this with the predictable and unimaginative spells of *D&D/AD&D*, or the rigid sytematic formulae of *Runequest*, and you soon realise that the use of magic in fantasy games has become very routine - even mundane! Since magic is supposed to be mysterious and transmundane, something is obviously wrong. What is needed is an injection of atmosphere and imagination.

Lore and Order

Vancian Magic is presented as a practical science, in the sense of a pragmatic system which is put to good use: it succeeds in situations where human exertion is inefficient or ineffective. One may benefit from the use of magic without necessarily understanding it, and emphasis is placed on the learning of spells rather than the principles behind them. At times, magic seems very scientific indeed: 'I need only a pair of quampics and a red-eyed bifaulgate sandestin...' and there is even a reference to a powerful abstract lore of symmetry known as 'mathematics'.

Naturally, many magician-philosophers in the time of Grand Motholam tried to grasp the basic concepts behind magical power. They reasoned that a knowledge of the structure of magical power might enable a complete control of nature, without the tiresome need to memorise and repeat spells and rituals. Unfortunately, they discovered that such knowledge was beyond the limits of human comprehension. No entity less than Pancreator could perceive the entire pattern of the Universe. Henceforth they concerned themselves with practical problems, seeking abstract solutions only in desperation. One does not have to understand thermal physics to start a bonfire; nor is a comprehension of the laws of gravity and terminal velocity essential in order to fall from a great height. As long as one knows what something does, it is not necessary to know how it does it. Vance's wizards are more concerned with effect than with cause - a profitable attitude.

Above all, Vance's magic is a unique creation of personalised invocations and anthropocentric enchantment. The terminology of every spell is distinctive and elaborate, as demonstrated by these examples:

Felojun's Second Hypnotic Spell - a paralysing enchantment;
Phandaal's Gyrator Spell - the victim is caused to spin in the air at any speed or height! Powerful and cinematic indeed;
The Spell of the Omnipotent Sphere - an extremely powerful field of force;
The Charm of Untiring Nourishment - which allows the recipient to survive without food nor air;
The Spell of Internal Effervescence - sounds ghastly, doesn't it?
The Excellent Prismatic Spray - a spectrum of stabbing rays. Very pretty and very deadly;

The Call to the Violent Cloud - summons a sentient pillar of smoke. An awesome one-way transportation;
Phandaal's Critique of the Chill - a long but simple spell of freezing;
The Inside Out and Over - a highly dangerous spell of 31 syllables, which inverts the topology of the surrounding area. Thus may a house be turned inside out and upside down! Not to be cast outside;
Arnhoult's Sequestrious Digitalia - an inconspicuous pickpocket spell; and
The Spell of Temporal Stasis - normally banned by common agreement of all wizards, this spell stops time for all but the caster. Just in case, most magicians carry extratemporal monitors which indicate if the spell has been cast.

We can but guess at *Tinkler's Old-fashioned Froust* (a charm?), or *Radl's Pervasion of the Incorrect Chord*...

Even those who have never heard of Felojun can guess that he was a great savant of Grand Motholam, and that his *Second Hypnotic Spell* is from magnificent times. Clearly, the aim of these spellnames is to inspire respect and wonder at the power of the wizard. The wordsmiths Chambers and Roget would have been held in high regard by the savants of Grand Motholam.

Even so, a certain Cugel is obviously bluffing with claims of being able to cast something called *The Spell of the Macroid Toe*, which supposedly causes the signalized member to swell to the proportions of a house...

The Power of Magic

Where does the actual power of magic come from?

Obviously the power cannot come straight from the magic-user, who would be left drained and exhausted after a single spell. Magic must come from some outside, natural source. In the *AD&D* rules, Gary Gygax talks about positive and negative planes, but this is not the whole picture. Magic comes from the very essence of Nature itself. It is part of the ordered balance of the Universe. The force of Nature exists everywhere and flows through everything. It is possible to be 'in tune' with these natural forces, and to make use of them, but you have to know how. This knowledge corresponds to a spell.

A spell is a code or set of instructions for manipulating Nature. A magic 'program', if you like. A spell is generally believed to be a ritual procedure involving incantation, material components and much hand-waving, but this is a misconception. A spell comes from the mind: it is a thought, an idea, a pattern in the brain. It is not the sound of the words, or the motion of the hands, which releases magic. These are merely bodily manifestations of the flow of power. The chants and somatics are also useful ways of remembering and concentrating on the desired thoughts. Ritual is an aid to achieving correct state of mind.

Continued on page 27

VANCE'S EVOCATION OF ARCANE DELIGHT

This means that, the more accomplished the magician, the less ritual is needed to cast spells. A powerful high-level wizard need not perform the words or actions of a simple spell, but will merely 'think' it. An apprentice sorcerer might spend minutes trying to cast the same spell.

It does not mean, however, that the words are unimportant. It is by memorising the words of a spell that a wizard is able to store the code in his mind. The number of syllables making up a Vancian magic spell is usually a good indication of the power of the magic. The lesser spells are shorter and thus easier to learn than the greater incantations.

To cast the spell, the wizard must concentrate on the words. Such magic is usually eager to release itself upon the world, and the wizard will find the syllables rising to the surface of his mind like bubbles in liquid. As long as they leave his lips with the right timing and sequence, there is no problem. The spell is cast, the code functions, the magic is unleashed upon the world, reality is rearranged. The wizard must concentrate on correct rhythm of syllables, for the spell will fail if there is a hesitation or a mispronunciation. In any event, the code is lost from the wizards's memory and he must re-learn the spell to be able to cast it.

Binding Relationships

There comes a time when it is necessary for the magician to employ one or more supernatural servants to aid him in his magical practices.

These creatures range from frail spirits and lowly elementals to the magical entities known as *sandestins*. All wizards of note have, in their service, a number of sandestins. Above sandestins in power are the creatures known as *daihaks*: these include demons and gods! The greatest arch-magicians of Grand Motholam are said to have bound the lesser daihaks to their service. Long term *White Dwarf* readers may be interested to know that *Cugel's Saga* features a demon by the name of *Pulsifer*...

Sandestins and their ilk are magical creatures, sentient beings of a trans-mundane nature. Some are extraterrestrial in origin, some may have evolved in the magical atmosphere of the Dying Earth, and others still may be as old as the Universe. By definition, everything they do is an act of magic. They are not bound by time and space, and can move freely between planes and dimensions unless something prevents them. Consequently, they have no fixed appearance but may manifest themselves in any way they feel comfortable. While in physical form these creatures may be harmed like any other, and a wizard may make use of this.

Every sandestin has slightly different abilities. A wizard should thus only use supernatural servants whose powers are in accordance with his own. A pyromystic will choose fire elementals; a hydromancer wil listen to the words of an undine; and a demonist will be well-served by creatures from the demon-worlds of Kalu, Fauvune and Jeldred.

No supernatural being actually wishes to serve a wizard: the sorcerer must coerce the creature with his own will-power and certain designated spells. It was Phandaal himself who formulated and systematised the methods of controlling these sentient beings. For example, there would appear to be a number of ways to control sandestins. Vance refers to a semi-intelligent sub-type of sandestin known as a *chug*, which can be easily manipulated to control others. Even the mention of the word 'chug' is repellent to sandestins.

A wizard may also take advantage of the rank and hierarchy structure to which sandestins conform: by controlling one sandestin, the wizard may also control the sandestins of a lower order. At the apex of this structure is a daihak so terrible that he is referred to only as the *Great Name*. If a wizard learns the real name of this daihak then he may threaten to invoke it. This is abhorrent to sandestins, who fear their great superior and would avoid his attention at all costs.

The use of sandestins should be considered a last resort. The effort required is fatiguing and the risk is great, even if the rewards are considerable. The alien nature of sandestins makes them appear treacherous and chaotic, and they never tire of trying to deceive those who would use them. Failure to bind a creature can have a number of results, depending on the wizard and the entity. A minor spirit or wispy madling would simply flee. A sandestin might demand that no further attempts be made, on pain of retribution. As for daihaks, I am sure your own imaginations have already conceived a number of unpleasant possibilities.

One point must be made. *The power of the sandestin is unimportant, the uses it is put to are not.* The merest wisp of a being can become the greatest of spies. The most potent demiurge usually makes the biggest mistakes. Therefore, it pays to never give a difficult or ambiguous order. The servant will resent having to carry out the wishes of a mortal, and will always try to extract alternative interpretations. Make it clear who is in control. Even then, some creatures have an annoying habit of *pretending* to be under the command of a conjurer when in fact the binding was unsuccessful...

Spelling Mistakes

Everybody makes mistakes. In the case of magicians, however, errors can prove far more than costly. A slight distraction, a lapse in concentration, and WUMPH! - the spell backfires. Cugel, a complete novice, tries to learn the simplest of spells in *The Eyes of the Overworld*:

> *One day, while applying a spatial transposition upon a satin cushion, he inverted certain of the pervulsions and was himself hurled backwards into the vestibule.*

Most of the time, of course, a bungled spell will simply not cause anything to happen - but don't count on it. Even lowly first-level spells may have disastrous consequences when fumbled. The reasons are obvious. When a magician casts a spell, he is acting as a conductor of magic power. Raw natural energies are channelled and focused through his mind and body. As we discover in *Rhialto The Marvellous*, gruesome accidents occur if the forces are not kept under control:

> *...from her throat erupted a great spell - an explosion of power too strong for the tissues of her body, so that blood spurted from her mouth and nose.*

In this case, the incantation of destruction - a *Power Word* - succeeds. However, even the spellcaster sustains minor injuries, despite that fact that she is the most powerful sorceress on Earth. I leave it to you to guess what would have occurred in less experienced hands...

Thankfully, this channelling also prevents magicians from unleashing 'planet-buster' spells - the caster would be vaporized before the first words could be uttered, rather like a fuse burning out under excess current. Spellcasting is clearly a dangerous business.

One element of the *AD&D* game which most certainly does not fit Vancian Magic is the 'saving throw'. This wargame legacy has proliferated in the megadeath environment of hack-and-slay gaming, turning everything into a matter of luck. Good arguments for its use are put forward, but then ruined by making the actual saving throws far too easy. When Vance's wizards cast spells correctly, those spells work.

If you try leaving saving throws to the GM's judgement, you'll find it necessary to put thinking and roleplaying before combat. There are still plenty of ways for the victim of magic to escape, and these are preferable because they depend on wit and imagination rather than blind fortune. You can take precautions, eg a mirror against prismatic beams; you can seek magical protections and counterspells; you can interrupt the spellcasting (some spells are quicker than others); you can destroy the wizard's concentration; or you can try deception. You can even trick the wizard into using up his spells harmlessly - by creating decoys, or leading him into dangerous situations, or even by flattering him into a demonstration.

Ideally, you should avoid the wrath of wizards in the first place.

Yellow Pages

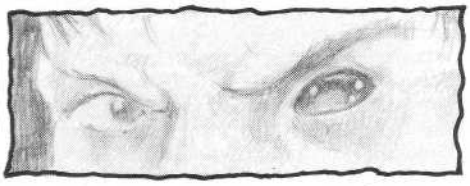
Because of the necessity to learn, memorise and re-memorise spells, a spellbook is an essential possession of every magician. A spellbook is simply an empty album in which the wizard will write all of his spells, notes, and magical jottings. Every spellbook is therefore unique and priceless to that

particular mage. Take away a sorcerer's spellbook and you take away his sorcery. The value of such an item cannot be exaggerated - what price can you place on a lifetime's work? And an extended lifetime at that...

Many books were written in the days of Grand Motholam. The common reference works have been reproduced widely - *The Cyclopaedia, The Vapurial Index* - and most wizards have a complete library of such informative accounts and historical essays. However, it is the codices of spells and manuals of invocation that are most sought. Despite three aeons of wear some ancient spellbooks have survived, protected perhaps by the dweomers they conceal. It is only through these legacies of the wisest of Grand Motholam that magic has lasted to the 21st Aeon. Most prized and distinguished are the tomes and volumes which have purple bindings, for these are the magic treatises and critiques which belonged to Great Phandaal himself. Magicians would kill for an edition of the Arch-Necromancer's arcana. Many already have.

A wizard's first priority is to protect his spellbooks. Rhialto the Marvellous keeps his in an extra-dimensional cubby-hole. The compendia of Zaraides could fly safely home when thrown into the air. Most spellbooks are written in a personal code or cypher, often using terminology and jargon. Some exude such an aura of menace that none dare open the covers (for this reason all magicians must learn the ancient runes and magical languages of Grand Motholam). Perhaps the book really is dangerous, and the first page contains protective symbols. Perhaps the spidery scrawl within becomes a horde of real spiders if the book is read by anyone but the wizard. The books may even be sentient, containing sandestins or the spirits of dead wizards, such that they are able to protect themselves, although a spellbook with a mind of its own may be more trouble than it's worth.

Spell books are rarely inconspicuous. They are as distinctive as their masters, written with a variety of inks on obscure parchment of dubious origin. Where bindings are concerned, diversity is often more apparent than utility. 21st Aeon sorcerers prefer the aestheticism of platinum scales, or layered crystal, or the polished and recognisable hide of some magnificent monster. Human skin, the traditional binding of magical books, is considered passé and somewhat gauche.



You Either Got, or You haven't Got, Style

Will-power and self-confidence are essential for the mastery of magic powers. If you wish to deal with ancient elementals, or channel a lightning bolt through your fingers, then concentration and strength of mind are, to say the least, rather important...

This means, however, that magicians tend to be capricious and self-willed. They are egotists and perfectionists, obsessed with their

own power and self-importance. Each knows he is Creation's gift to magical research. There is nobody dearer to any wizard than himself.

The most obvious characteristic of any Vancian wizard is his style. Yes, *style*. Even wizards have street-cred. Each adopts a very distinct and personal style of dress, speech, mannerisms, and even magic. Nothing is more important to a wizard than his own distinct and remarkable image.

Wizards are not above using magic to make themselves more distinctive. It ought to be possible for a wizard to control everything about his own appearance, from the colour of his eyes to the shape of his physique. It's those imaginative little extras which make the difference between a great wizard and a notoriously great wizard.

Above all, magicians are individuals. And this approach is apparent in everything concerning the magician. The wizards of the 21st Aeon command a mere fraction of the magic effected by Phandaal and his contemporaries, and they live in constant awareness of this. Overshadowed by the great mages of the past, every wizard must seek individuality or vanish into oblivion.

In *Rhialto the Marvellous*, Vance introduces a group of magicians who have formed an association to protect their interests. Style and diversity are immed-iately apparent among the members of the association, who include:

Zahoulik-Khuntze, whose iron fingernails and toenails are engraved with curious signs;
Eshmiel, who affects a stark and absolute chiaroscuro, so that the right side of his body is white and the left side is black;
Haze of Wheary Water, a hot-eyed wisp with green skin and orange willow-leaves for hair;
Teutch, who seldom speaks with his mouth but uses an unusual sleight to flick words from his fingertips; and
Darvilk the Miaanther, who always wears a night-black domino.

Magicians are proud creatures. Each believes himself to be the leader of his field, whether it is true or not. Magicians will boast about, and often exaggerate, their magical abilities - and this is their biggest weakness. Some wizards are susceptible to flattery.

Others, while powerful, are over-confident, and will talk themselves into situations from which they cannot escape. However, it is never advisable to doubt the power of a wizard without good reason. Even the weakest conjurers may keep a 'last resort' spell to hand, and you can bet they've been waiting for just such an opportunity to show it off.

A Cage of Brightly-feathered Birds

In Phandaal's day, Magician's Guilds were a means of assembling people with similar interests and pursuits. The infamous Green and Purple College worked long and hard in the furtherance of magical knowledge, serving the sorcerers of Grand Motholam and sharing their experiences. When Pontecilla outlawed magic, such organisations fell. Those members who did not flee immediately suffered a treacherous and undignified demise at the hands of spies and infiltrators.

By the 21st Aeon, the greatest magicians have again formed associations to protect their common interests. Unlike The College, these associations are small and cautious. They are also highly unstable. The reasons for this are apparent in Vance's description of the wizards involved:

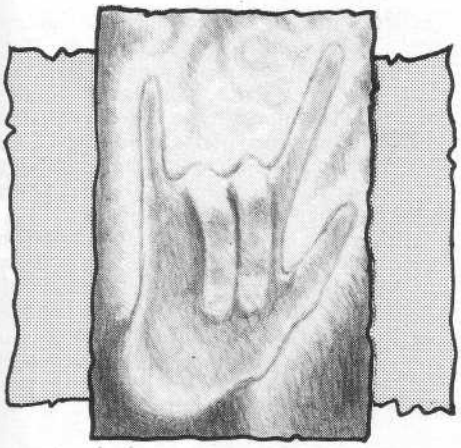
...gathered in colloquy, they seemed an assembly of rare and wonderful birds, each most mindful of his own plumage... only after a number of unhappy incidents were they persuaded to regulate themselves by a code of conduct.

Because of their self-centred nature, magicians find it hard to get on with other people. With other *magicians* they are downright impossible, and arguments are common. It is a case of ego against ego, irresistable force against irresistable force - and sometimes an unfortunately immovable object gets caught in the middle. Like the machiavellian members of a political clique, a wizard will remain with a group only as long as it is in his best interests to do so.

There may be many such cliques and cabals, groups of sorcerers. If so, then rivalry would be an automatic reaction. Never again will the Dying Earth see a Green and Purple College: the clash of personalities prevents any definitive magic association or authority, since no point could ever be agreed upon. For every mage who holds a particular opinion, there will be another who believes otherwise. Some wizards will oppose an idea simply because another supports it.

Wizards are like that.

This is, perhaps, rather fortunate for the magically-ignorant population of 21st Aeon Earth. An association whose membership consisted solely of wizards and sorcerers in every field of magic could easily assume an enormous political power. Imagine a society ruled by people who claim to be able to see everything, do anything, and go everywhere...



We may also suspect that Pontecilla the Pious had some political motivation when he killed Phandaal, the chief and figurehead of the sorcerers.

The Cutting Edge

Much has been said concerning the way *AD&D* magic users are not allowed to use any weapon bigger than a staff. Some complain that it is unrealistic to apply such abstract limitations. Why shouldn't they use them? Gandalf, the archetypal fantasy wizard, carries a sword, doesn't he? Others have claimed it is necessary to provide game-balance. Armed magic users would be too powerful. But no-one seems to have really thought about it in psychological terms.

Vancian Wizards do not carry swords. Vancian wizards do not even carry daggers or darts or staves. There is no pseudo-rationalisation for this. There are no abstract limitations on magicians. And Vance never needs to explain why wizards do not carry weapons, because it is obvious. Consider these three points concerning the use of weapons by magic users:

1. *They don't need them*. Vance's wizards are quite capable of looking after themselves in their own special ways. Not that a wizard would really know how to use a weapon anyway. What is the point of spending your entire life learning magic if you forget it all in favour of a lump of iron? Besides, any creature able to resist the spells of a wizard would not be threatened by a mere sword.

2. *They don't believe in them*. A sword symbolises physical strength. Wizards believe in mental strength, and consider themselves superior to those who have to exert their bodies. No wizard would carry something associated with warriors and barbarians. Imagine the pure shame of having to resort to the same means of defence as a muscle-headed fighter!

3. *They wouldn't be wizards if they used them*. The use of a weapon would destroy the wizard's image. No magician would carry a sword, even if he felt a need for it. A weapon casts doubt on the wizard's magical powers. What kind of a magus trusts in steel? Nobody would believe he was a real wizard, and his threats would sound hollow. But meet that same magus wandering dangerous forests without so much as a dagger and you know he *must* have exceptional hidden powers. Even the cleverer monsters would avoid him.

The wizard would even begin to doubt his own powers if he carried a weapon. He would feel it tugging constantly at his side, and it would lay heavily on his mind. The time would come when his hands reached for the hilt instead of making somatic cyphers - and it's all downhill from there. A magician's power comes from confidence - confidence in himself, confidence in his ability to control magic. Take that away and you take away the magic too.

The problems can be resolved quite simply. At low levels, *AD&D* magic-users are very weak: at high levels they are very powerful. Therefore it is sensible in both gameworld and game-balance for low-level magic-users to carry whatever weapons they wish. Such a magic-user can consider himself no more than an apprentice conjurer. He will be treated like one by commoners and wizards alike. Only when he is prepared to give up all physical weapons will he be able to call himself a true magician. Only then will he be accepted by wizards and respected by commonfolk. Only then will he have the self-confidence to summon monsters, to bind demons, and to follow in his own field of magic.

Creating a Wizard

There are some simple steps you can follow when creating that memorable Vancian Magician. Or you can ignore them completely and trust in your own imagination. Such is the way of wizards.

Aptitude

Given the correct book, anybody could learn a simple spell. Anybody could utter the syllables of *Panguire's Triumphant Displasms*. What stops most people becoming wizards is the effort required to memorise the slightest of magics. The greatest magicians are not ordinary men, but have some natural aptitude for spell-casting. Without innate powers of concentration and syllabic recall, magic becomes so exhausting that it isn't worth the effort. All wizards are therefore 'born magicians'. This partly explains the self-centred nature of wizards: all of their lives have been spent knowing they are special.

Another power of the natural magician is the innate magical sense, which is sometimes able to detect the dweomer or reverberation of magic. This sense improves with experience and varies from wizard to wizard. Some say they 'smell' magic, others say they can 'hear' it as a soft tinkling or ringing. Others still might be able to see on a magical wavelength, detecting the source as a purple glow of an intensity indicative of its strength.

Sex

Most of Vance's wizards are male. There is no reason why females may not be wizards, but Vance's witches tend to be of the old hag or young seductress stereotypes. Vance is at least aware of his own sexism, and attempts to rationalise it. He states that since The Queen of the Witches, Llorio the Murthe, departed from Earth, taking a cortége of wise women, feminine power has dwindled. It is because Men now rule that the Dying Earth is such a dreadfully chaotic and violent place. Indeed, the wizard Vermoulian the Dreamwalker describes a visit to a dreamworld where Llorio rules: it is a world without violence or greed, where the wisdom of women is truly appreciated.

Unfortunately, Utopia is no place for excitement and adventure...

Experience

Firstly, all Vancian wizards claim to have considerable magic powers, and they would certainly seem to have worked for them. 'The ordinary man must study forty years even to become an apprentice.' Fortunately, Vancian sorcerers also have extraordinarily long lifetimes in which to learn their craft. This is due to a magical enhancement of longevity, one of the first enchantments a magician must learn if he is to rise far above apprenticeship.

Secondly, any person who is serious about Magic needs the privacy of their own environment. Only an accomplished wizard will already have his own secluded manse and grounds in which to live, work, relax, research, experiment, concentrate, and throw wild parties. In the 18th Aeon, for example, the Arch-Mage Moel Lel Laio lived in a palace carved from but a single pale moonstone, shards of which are still to be found on the Plain of Grey Shades.

Field of Magic

The wizard must have a branch of magical science or magical philosophy in which to specialise. A career magician will strive to lead in whatever field of magic he chooses, eventually making it his own. Naturally, the wizard will gain bonuses and extra powers in his special field - perhaps at the expense of other unrelated powers, if you wish.

The *AD&D* character class system already allows a variety of magic users, but don't restrict yourself. Normal wizards can research into whichever subject they desire. Possibilities are Magical History (the MU would learn lots about legendary Mages, old spells and magic items); Demonolatry; Information Gathering and Communic-ation; Transportation; Sound- or Light-related Magic; Pyromancy; Hydromancy; Necromancy; Healing Magic; Shape-changing, Metamorphosis, and Trans-mogrification; Planes and Dimensions; Weather Magic; Runes, Symbols, and Ancient Glyphs; Animation (the creation of plants, animals and higher creatures in vats); and so on.

Title

All great wizards have titles. All magicians believe they are great wizards. Therefore all magicians have titles... The title should be relevant to the wizard or field of magic. Rhialto the Marvellous is so named because of his shameless vanities and airs, and his obsession with appearance (in actual fact he claims to be an expert in 'calligynics': calli- as in calligraphy and callisthenics, -gynics from the Greek gynos for - oh, work it out for yourself...).

Other examples are Iucounu the Laughing Magician, Florejin the Dream-Builder, Ao of the Opals, Byzant the Necrope, Calanctus the Calm, Ildefonse the Preceptor, and Herark the Harbinger.

Appearance

Hache-Moncour... had contrived for himself the semblance of a Ctharion nature-god, with bronze curls and exquisite features.

Wizards express their individualism through their appearance. Start with simple things - does the wizard always wear clothes of a particular colour? Does the wizard sport a hat or hood? A foppish dandy such as Rhialto the Marvellous might wear a wide-brimmed gold-trimmed triple-tiered black hat with two-foot plumes of green feather; a serious haruspex like Herark the Harbinger would simply bind his hair in a copper fillet to keep it out of the way.

Sometimes, the chosen apparel will be relevant to the magician. A hydromancer might wear only blue. A Rune-Mage might 'tattoo' his face and body with arcane glyphs and devices. An illusionist might wear a mask to symbolise visual deception. The wizard should have something distinguishing, even if it is no more than a black opal thumb-ring.

Speech

While the wizard would undoubtedly have his own identifiable voice and use his own recognisable patterns of speech, detail is not essential. All magicians are likely to use magical jargon, of course, so feel free to throw in phrases about 'sympathetic ensqualmation' and 'ectopic telegnosis'. Don't call it a *fly* spell: call it *The Enchantment of Vertical Emancipation* or something. Similarly, *invisibility* becomes *Phandaal's Seamless Mantle of Transparency.*

Character

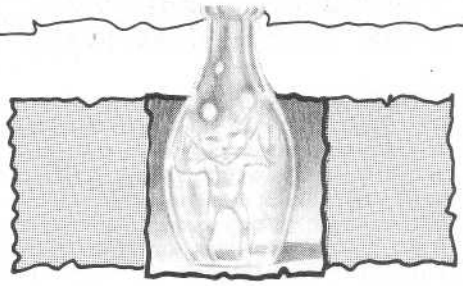
Do not fall prey to the misconception that all wizards think alike. Whilst they have much in common, they are as distinctive in mind as in body. It is for you to build a character upon these common foundations. Is the wizard extroverted or withdrawn? Peaceful or truculent? Intolerant or diplomatic? Careless or meticulous? Altruistic or hedonistic?

Ideally, the personality of the wizard will determine his other characteristics. Often, it works in reverse. The Pyromancer will adopt a fiery temper. The Lithomancer will become impassive and unyielding. A Wanderer of Planes and Dimensions, thinking on many levels at once, will speak and act in an apparently disordered fashion. And imagine the schizoid tendencies of a weather-wizard...

Little Extras

Wizards have exceptional powers of manipulation at their fingertips. It is sensible to assume that a small amount of that magic will be diverted into spicing up the wizard's image - those little extras. Again, the magic frills should be in keeping with the magician.

Appearance will be the first to benefit. A druid might alter his eyes to look like those of a cat. A lithomancer could replace his teeth with a set of shaped gemstones. A Dream-forger could wear a cloak of everchanging colours. And a spiritcharming shaman might permanently walk on air, six inches above the



ground - or eight inches plus when he's happy...

Just because there are no listed spells which achieve these effects doesn't mean you cannot have them. It is enough to realise that there are innumerable minor magics, useful yet trivial. One would expect a mighty Arch-Necromancer to be able to walk through a rainstorm without getting damp - but do you really expect to see details for *Hastreme's Evocation of the Ambient Umbrella*? No, of course not. Such details are left to the players: yet there are still cries of 'You can't do that, it's not in the rules'! Gary Gygax tried to get the idea across with Cantrips, very minor spells for apprentice magic users. Unfortunately he went about it the wrong way, by staying strictly within the *AD&D* rules and detailing lots of 'Official' cantrips. The message was effectively strangled by the system.

It doesn't matter that a simple spell isn't listed in the *Players Handbook* or whatever. If you think it should exist then make it up. Use your imagination! Don't stifle it with rules.

Style should become apparent in the wizard's magic itself: Vancian magic is so personal that even the famous spells of Great Phandaal are open to different interpretations when cast.

Every magician has his own ideas about the precise nature and manifestation of any magic, and will impress these ideas upon the final result. Thus, each spell and enchantment should be distinct and recognisable as the work of one particular wizard. For example, the fireball thrown by a necromancer might manifest itself as a flaming skull. A weather-mage might fly on a small white cloud, and teleport by turning into a man-sized tornado.

Even the spellcasting itself will be affected by the overpowering field of the Magician's Ego. Chill drafts will appear from nowhere, bearing an alien chorus of sound. The wizard's eyes will glow briefly before fading to wells of abyssal darkness. Sparks will crackle harmlessly over the surface of his skin. The Dreamsmith's magic will fill the air with myriad bubbles of prismatic colour. The Necromancer will utter spells in a voice which is not his own. And it is usual for candles to flicker and lamps to dim when a Demonist gets to work...

...he muttered a spell of eleven syllables, so that the air between himself and Cugel twisted and thickened. The forces veered out toward Cugel and past, to rattle away in all directions, cutting russet and black streaks through the grass.

All of these 'theatrical effects' might seem unnecessary, even melodramatic. However, they are not just extensions of an inflated ego. It is important to realise that part of a wizard's power derives from Fear. People are afraid of that which they do not understand: it is completely beyond their control. Magic is certainly feared, shrouded by outrageous falsehoods and countless superstitions. Thus may a Magician, commanding that object of fear, become feared himself. By taking advantage of superstition and uneducated belief he may convince the simple of his apparent omnipotence. And he need only threaten its use to coerce others, without ever having to exert his magical abilities.

Of course, it is likely that at least one person will doubt the Magician's claims. This is where the 'theatricals' prove helpful. The magician can begin to speak a Spell, throwing in all of his personal affectations. If the doubter runs away screaming, the Spell may be aborted. If the doubter is still unimpressed, his body will serve as an example to others.

Theatrical effects also reinforce images and boost egos, of course. They are another part of the wizard's trademark, identifying his own brand of magic. A magician can derive a great deal of satisfaction from seeing his own personal magic take form. (This isn't just a Vancian idea. In Lord of the Rings, when Elrond raises the river at the Ford of Bruinen, even Gandalf cannot resist shaping the waves to resemble white riders).

But why am I telling you all this?

We are told that the *AD&D* magic system is based on the ideas in Vance's *The Dying Earth*. The latter is a splendid feast of imagination. The former is a set of strict and unevocative rules. It is easy to derive the former from the latter. It is impossible to do the opposite - creating ideas and stories from a rules system - without a significant input of imagination. Yet this is what roleplaying is supposed to be! Shouldn't games encourage creative expression?

By introducing some of Vance's imagination back into the rules, we provide a breeding-ground for further ideas and inventions along the same lines. Better still, we provide a game where imagination comes before rules. Understand that the rules are yours, to do with as you please. In this article I have given some ideas about modifying the system to suit your imagination. And that's how it should be. Not the other way around.

Simon Nicholson

WARHAMMER 40,000

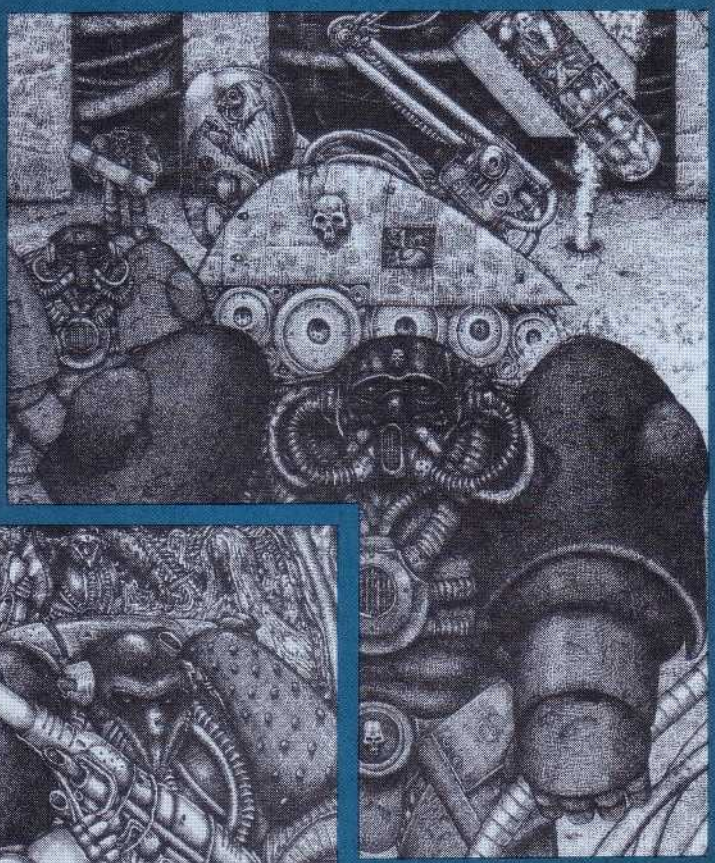
ROGUE TRADER

or more than a hundred centuries the Emperor has sat immobile on the Golden Throne of Earth. He is the Master of Mankind by the will of the gods and master of a million worlds by the might of his inexhaustible armies. He is a rotting carcass writhing invisibly with power from the Dark Age of Technology. He is the Carrion Lord of the Imperium to whom a thousand souls are sacrificed every day.

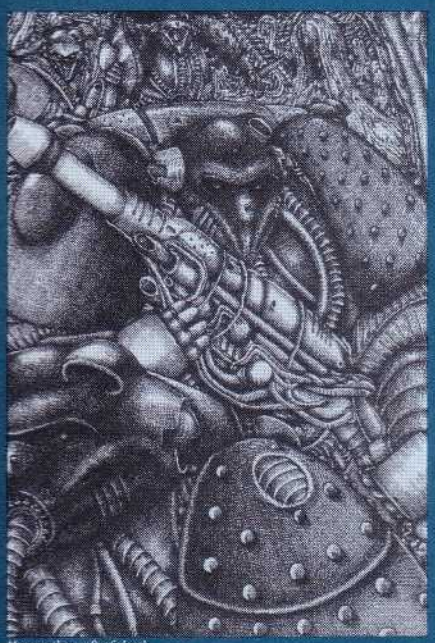
To be a man in such times is to be one amongst untold billions. It is to live in the cruellest and most bloody regime imaginable. This is the tale of these times. It is a universe you can live today if you dare - for this is a dark and terrible era where you will find little comfort or hope. If you want to take part in the adventure then prepare yourself now. Forget the power of technology, science and common humanity. Forget the promise of progress and understanding, for there is no peace amongst the stars, only an eternity of carnage and slaughter and the laughter of thirsting gods.

But the universe is a big place and, whatever happens, you will not be missed . . . .

What is Warhammer 40,000?



The catacombs beneath the Emperor's Palace



Honour the craft of death

Technicians of the Adeptus Mechanicus

Space Marine Commander

Well for starters it isn't just a science fiction game although it is set in the far future: 40,000 years more or less... you guessed! We call it a fantasy game set in the far future... a sort of science fantasy.

Like its sister game *Warhammer Fantasy Battle, Warhammer 40,000* is a miniatures based or 'tabletop' game. Unlike other tabletop games *Warhammer 40,000* places great emphasis on individual models moving within only loose formations. You won't need hundreds of models to play *Warhammer 40,000*, just a dozen will do - although when you see the gems the Citadel designers have come up with you'll want to collect the lot! *Warhammer 40,000* uses the familiar mechanisms of *Warhammer Fantasy Battle* and even many of the same creatures, which are now revealed in their entire cosmic guise.

The marines moved forward, plasti-steel boots leaving a trail of foot prints in the dust. Moments before, the dust had been a squad of orks, warriors of the alien invasion force which conquered the planet five short years ago.

Brother Tork powered down the multi-melta and slung the weapon on its carrying strap. Two blasts had dealt with the target. He watched his brother marines advancing before him, their steel-grey power-armour suits enwrapped in the snaking mist that rose from the muddy remains of the enemy.

Our thoughts light the Darkness that others may cross space.

We are one with Emperor, our souls are joined in his will.

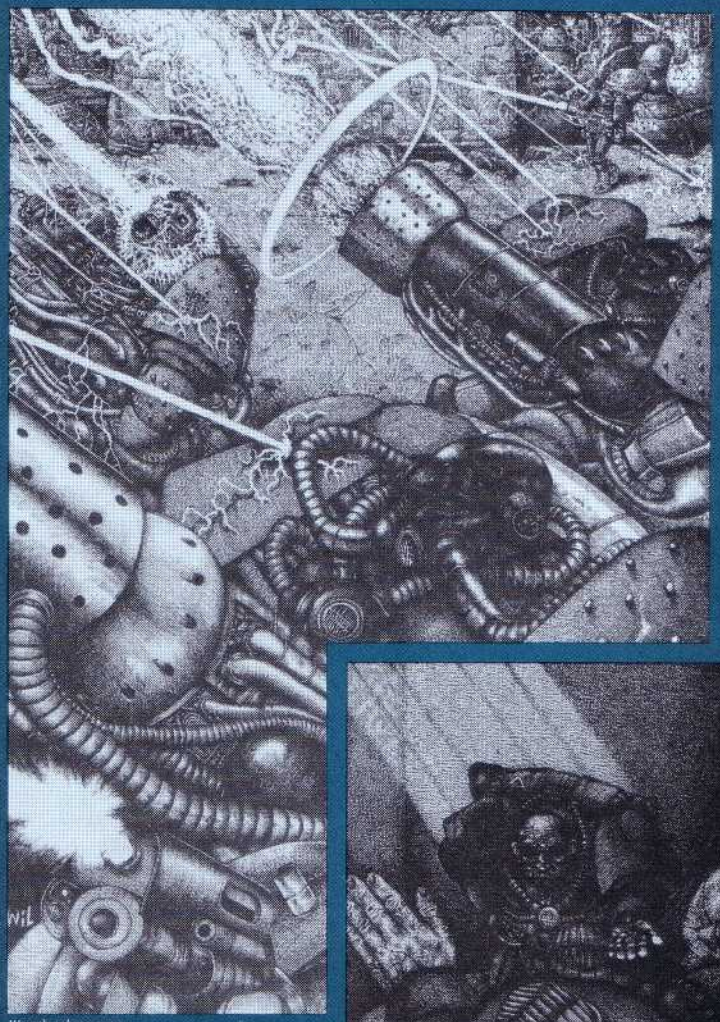
He felt the warmth of the ground despite the heavy insulation built into the soles of his boots. He had fallen behind. The rest of the squad stood a score of paces to his front, their grey forms shimmering in the heat-haze. Beyond them the jungle thickened once more, an obscene growth of orange foliage rising as tall as a drop-ship. The trees arched their huge fronds towards the south where the second sun was rising.

Were Brother Tork foolish enough to remove his helmet, the powerful rays of this alien daylight would destroy his sight within an instant. He gave thanks for the protection of the suit's auto-senses, the witch-machine that conveyed unblinking images directly to his mind.

***Warhammer 40,000* takes the *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* background into the galaxy itself.**

An extensive range of troops types covers humans warriors, human mutant variants, the administrative officers of the Imperium and their alien foes. Each of the alien races is discussed in detail together with generation charts for their equipment, weapons and armour. As well as the familiar creatures of the *Warhammer* mythos there are numerous new monsters, alien creatures, plants and warp entities (creatures drawn from the raw stuff of warp-space).

They began to appear out of the forest, at first in ones and twos, then in small groups. The children and old-folk followed as best they could. The first of the creatures drew close. Five years ago these creatures had been human settlers, before the ork invasion force broke their plexi-shelter domes and cast them out into the weird and hostile forests.



We ask only to serve

Brethren of the Angels of Death

The Emperor

Adeptus Mechanicus Prefect

Praise the Emperor whose sacrifice is life as ours is death.

Hail his name the Master of Humanity.

extract from *The Credo of the Astronomican*

Tork loosened the strap on the multi-melta and the other marines levelled their bolters. Captain Dolenz motioned the company to remain in position. His voice rang through Tork's auto-sense.

'Stay back.'

One of the once-humans was saying something to the Captain, kneeling before him, crooning something inaudible, caressing the marine's armour with hands grown scaly and black. All were blind; all had the pearly white eyes possessed by so many beggars in Jubal, the only human settlement which had survived. Tork could hear the man's croaking voice. Perhaps the words were 'Save us! Save us...'

***Warhammer 40,000* is a very different game than anything you might have played or seen before. The billions upon billions of humans living in the Imperium are bizarre and diverse in a way that only the barely sane population of a medieval universe could be. Amongst them are numerous human-morphs, creatures evolved from men under the influence of unearthly conditions: the rugged squats, tiny ratlings, massive ogryns and bestial abhumans.**

They live in the Imperium, an empire whose boarders are delineated by the shifting tides of warp-space. Within its boundaries, the affairs of humanity are administered by the multitudinous layers of the Adeptus Terra, the priesthood of Earth and servants of the Emperor. Considerable attention has been given to developing the background and unusual feel of the game.

One aim was to create an almost medieval attitude amongst the human societies. Fear, superstition, self-sacrifice and common acceptance of death are all strongly featured. Technology is present, but it's not central to the way people think. Most common folk see technology as witchcraft - so do the technicians!

'Their eyes,' whispered Brother Nesmiv. 'They're blind!'

Tork watched the wretched creature that pawed at the Captain like a dog at the feet of its long-lost master. The others began to edge forward. Their ragged clothes were dirty and scant, their faces slavering, vacant, sightless. And then, glistening mandibles emerged from their mouths ...

Captain Dolenz turned quickly, his orders came clearly over the auto-sense.

'Aboriginal Population Irreparable Genetic Damage Terminate.'

Nesmiv's gun spoke first, spitting a hail of bolts into the first creature. Its body ruptured as the charges hit. The creatures turned and ran for the forest edge. Abandoned infants, the sick and the old were trampled. It was too late. The rest of the squad opened fire.

Liberation had come at last, mercifully administered from the gun barrels of the Space Wolves Chapter of the Space Marines.

Because *Warhammer 40,000* is a new game with a new background it needs proper support material.

Needless to say, an extensive range of miniatures is the first priority for any tabletop game. The initial release covers humans in depth and introduces the first of the alien races. Subsequent releases will provide even more human types and new aliens, including the larger and stranger aliens. From now on, you can look forward to new *Warhammer 40,000* models every month. Metal vehicles will be available as well, and work is already underway on larger plastic vehicles for the game.

Two *Warhammer 40,000* supplements are in preparation. Items ear-marked for inclusion are scenarios, alien race

Adeptus Astartes Space Marines

Death World Hunt

expansion, deep-space combat, boarding actions, and floorplans. These will enable players to take the action away from planets and into space itself.

The Captain ordered a halt while Brother Joens probed the jungle for hostiles. Psykers like Brother Joens were rare amongst the ranks of the Marines. Few of them were able to withstand the mind-wrenching horrors unavoidable in the line of duty.

No-one spoke, not because to do so might have disturbed the psyker's concentration, but because the battle-brothers were accustomed to silence. Silence saturated the cavernous halls of their fortress-monastery on the planet Lucan. Its stones remained eternally ignorant of levity or chatter. Its worn and ancient flagstones remembering only the contemplative tread of soft leather.

Tork recalled the sun shining through the airless atmosphere and the stained glass of the library-dome. Soon he would be home again... Unless the gods should favour him with a hero's death.

BACKGROUND

The galaxy has been dominated by mankind since the Age of Technology. But that era is now long gone, a semi-mythical time from which come half-understood and popularly feared ideas and machines known as the old science. The creators of the advanced technology that launched a million voyages of colonisation have been dead for over twenty thousand years. Fragmented over the entire galaxy, human civilisations developed and fell in pan-human wars, interstellar strife, social division and religious fanaticism.

Then, ten thousand years ago, one man began the slow and painful process of rebuilding humanity. He was the Emperor, the first of a new race of psychically powerful humans and the most powerful of his kind. Ten thousand years later, the Emperor still lives, his immobile carcass held together by pure force of will, his great mind bent to the service of humanity. Guided by his psychic powers, human spacecraft brave the seas of warp-space; human agents seek out the enemies of the race; the warriors of the Emperor destroy his enemies. Assailed by psychically attuned aliens the survival of the newly emergent race of human psychics remains in doubt. Only the constant vigilence of the Emperor shields humanity from the thousand perils that threaten its destruction.

The **Warhammer 40,000** background is an extension of the **Warhammer** game series, linking the **Warhammer Fantasy Battle** and **Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay** games into a complete background. The rule book looks in detail at the Imperium and the Adeptus Terra, the vast organistion that runs it. Rules are provided for the fighting arms of the Imperium, the Adeptus Astartes (Space Marines), the Army, the Adeptus Custodes (the Emperor's personal guard) and the Adeptus Arbites (the Imperium's judicial warriors). There are also sections on the psychics of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica; the Adeptus Astronomica, the corps responsible for maintaining the Astronomican, the psychic beacon of the Imperium; the civil service Administratum; the Adeptus Mechanicus and its technician members; the Navigators - the warp-space pilots; the Inquisitors, the Imperium's body of investigative agents; Rogue Traders, who are galactic privateers operating on the unexplored eastern edge of the galaxy and beyond; Imperial Syn-skin assassins; and the independent Imperial Commanders (planetary governors). Players have the opportunity to command not only ordinary humans but the various abhuman morphs including squats, ogryns, beastmen and psykers.

Players whose tastes run to more alien extremes have the opportunity to field armies of degenerate orks supported by their even-more-degenerate gretchin allies.

Adeptus Astartes - Chapter Blood Angels

Battle Brother of the Adeptus Astartes

Extract from a Training Chant in the *First Book of Indoctrinations*

To be Unclean
That is the mark of the Mutant
To be Impure
That is the mark of the Mutant
To be Abhorred
That is the mark of the Mutant
To be Reviled
That is the mark of the Mutant
To be Hunted
That is the mark of the Mutant
To be Purged
That is the fate of the Mutant
To be Cleansed
For that is the fate of all Mutants

Look to your battle-gear
and it will protect you

We guard it with our lives

Your armour is your Soul,
and your Soul's
dedication its armour

The soul of a warrior is the shield of humanity

Honour the craft of death

Only the Emperor is higher in our devotion

Honour the battle-gear of the Dead

We ask only to serve

Part of the
Warrior's Catechism
of Worship

Ork Warlord

Players with more refined sensibilities may wish to command the forces of the Eldar, an ancient race whose sub-light space-cities float upon the cosmic winds.

If your preferences are for large powerful creatures the warriors of the hive-fleets should meet your requirements, strange six-limbed monstrosities capable of bending biological material to their will. **Warhammer** die-hards will recognise the Slann and learn more of this once great race and its pivotal role in the history of the galaxy. More exotic aliens afford players the opportunity to use special powers, such as the weird Enslavers who have the ability to take over the minds of enemy troops, Crawlers which burrow beneath the ground surface, and the fearsome Catachan Devil... which just bites yer face clean off.

THE TECHNOLOGY

In **Warhammer 40,000** technology takes a definite back seat, but that doesn't mean that there isn't any to be found. In fact, there's a whole range of advanced weapons, armour types and equipment. The range of technology available reflects the diversity of humanity, ranging from the primitive crossbows and slings used on feral worlds to the barely understood digital and force weapons carried by rich and powerful individuals.

Technology permeates the society of the Imperium dispite the mystic aura associated with it. Warp-engines propel spacecraft into the fluid medium of warp-space whilst the Technomats of the Adeptus Mechanicus preserve the sacred knowledge of centuries etched upon the engineered memory cortexes in their brains. **Warhammer 40,000** has all the hardware you'd expect in any futuristic game, but interpreted in a radically different way. Gamemasters can utilise what technology they wish to pose different tactical problems for their players: drop-ships or teleporters, dreadnought armour or flak, agile flyers or lumbering crawlers - the opportunities for new permutations are almost endless.

THE GAME

Warhammer 40,000 is a tabletop game with plenty of scope for different kinds of action.

You can fight straight confrontations between humans and aliens, opposing groups of aliens, rebellious humans, or any combination against dangerous animals or plants. With all the galaxy to choose from, scenery can vary from dense jungles to towering cities. It can include such diverse features as lava flows, spongeweed, rubbermoss, magnetic fields, meteor strikes, spawn seas and pancake amoeba...

Helpful advice is given on how to set-up tabletop games and how to make your own scenary such as alien jungles and futuristic buildings. Full provision is made for aerial troops and vehicles, as well as the more unusual subterranean creatures and vehicles which appear in the game.

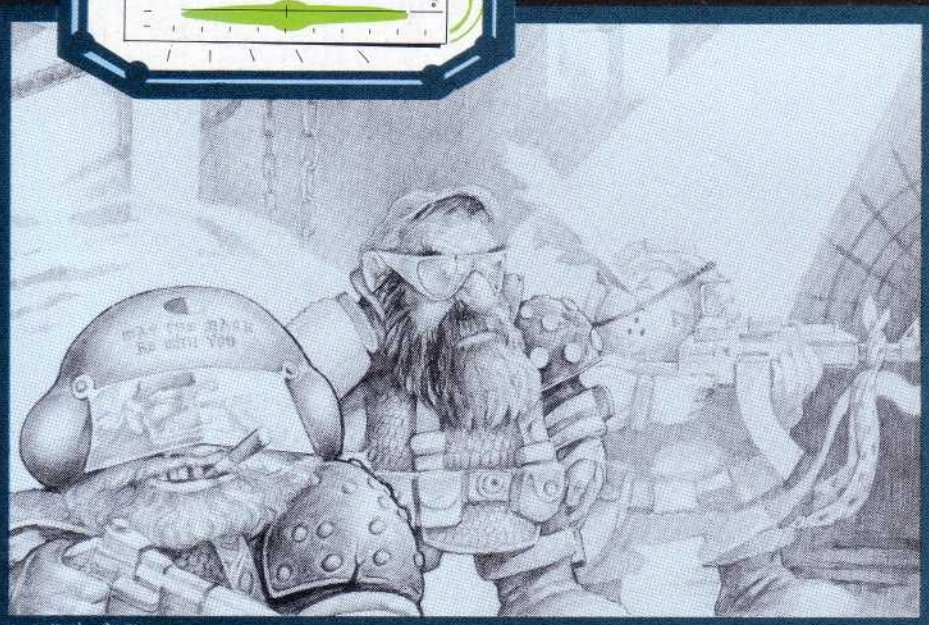
COMBAT

Combat follows the tried and tested **Warhammer Fantasy Battle** system with suitable allowance made to incorporate the deadly weapons of the future. In the face of bolt-guns, plasma bombs, chainswords and other extremely powerful weaponry, the role of armour becomes that much more important. Two broad types of armour are dealt with: armour energy fields and physical armour.

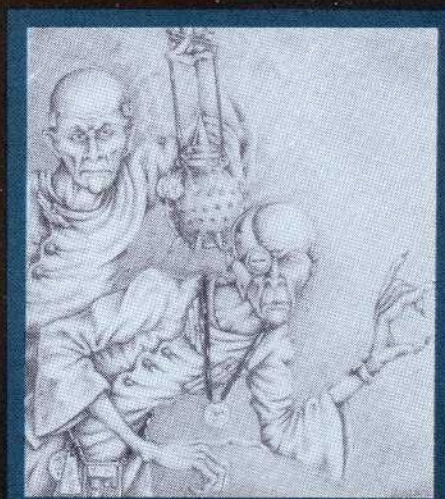
'Problems? *Problems?!* There is no problem I cannot solve with this...'

Mad 'Chainsaw' Johnson,
Commander of the
Whitescar Space Marines

(attributed)



Human Morphos - Squats



Adeptus Mechanicus - Technomats

Energy fields envelop the wearer in a protective force which can cause energy fire to dissipate or refract, or which absorbs the impact of physical objects. Other types act like small warp-engines, displacing the wearer and avoiding the hit, or else turn the energy of the shot into light, potentially blinding opponents.

Physical armour ranges from the humble flak armour (a pneumatically padded jacket), to full dreadnought armour, in which the pilot is suspended in a life preserving amniotic jelly from which he controls suit functions via a spinal link. Unlike in **Warhammer Fantasy Battle**, hits are targetted individually and results worked out in the same way, affording a far greater level of personal and character involvement. This becomes important when using weapons with variable damage, area effects, following fire or any of the other special attack modes unique to **Warhammer 40,000**.

PSYCHIC POWERS

Psychic powers play an important role in the affairs of the Imperium. Psychics (or psykers as they are known) are employed throughout the imperial hierarchy, including the army, the marines, and within the Adeptus Terra.

Psykers are also dangerous.

The emergence of immature, under-developed and inexperienced psykers amongst the human race acts like a honey-pot to the countless psychically-attuned monsters and intelligent creatures that live in warp-space. To protect those psykers unable to look after themselves, the Imperium maintains a close watch upon its population, ruthlessly hunting down and recruiting psykers into one of its organisations. Of these the most notable are the Adeptus Astronomica, the component-guardians of the psychic battery called the Astronomican. This psychic beacon is used by Navigators guide their ships through warp space.

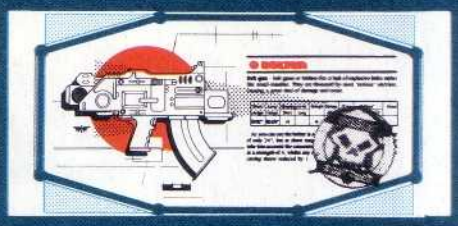
All inter-stellar communication is the preserve of another body of psychics, the Adeptus Astra Telepathica or Astropaths. Details are provided for over 100 psychic abilities ranging from psychic shields to creating whole scale geological upheaval! Full descriptions are included for a range of psychically aware monsters, including warp-entities, spectres, vampires and the gruesome psychneuein.

THE BOOK

Warhammer 40,000 is the latest hard-back book from Games Workshop, following the format which has made **Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay, Call of Cthulhu** and **Runequest III** so popular. The rules themselves are illustrated with numerous black-and-white diagrams for maximum clarity. Hardware and creatures are represented by technical data drawings and appropriate top-quality black-and-white art.

The book also includes a short introductory fight, Battle at the Farm. A comprehensive summary section and bound-in playsheet help speed play once gamers are familiar with the main rules.

Warhammer 40,000 also includes numerous photographs in black-and-white and colour, illustrating Citadel models in action on the tabletop and providing a wealth of painting and conversion detail. With additional colour and black-and-white scenic art commissioned and scrutinised by the fastidious John Blanche, we reckon **Warhammer 40,000** has to be one of the best illustrated games ever produced!



Rogue Trader - Agent of the Imperium

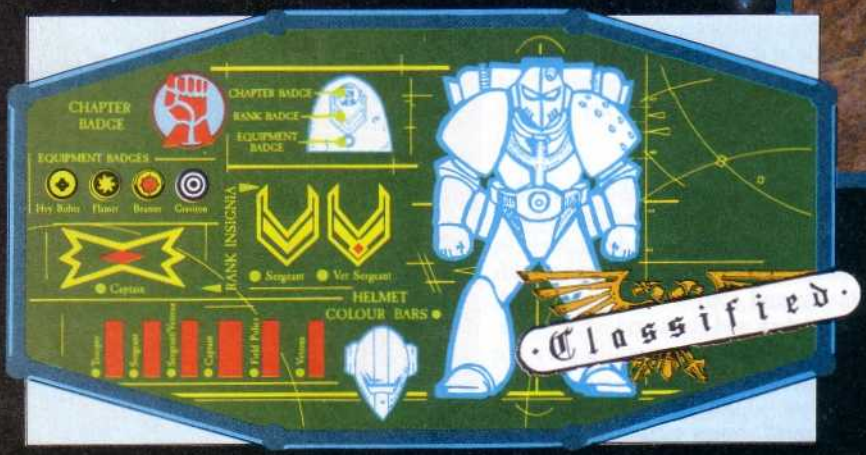
Imperial Inquisitor

Imperial War Robot

Dulce et decorum

IMPERIAL SPACE MARINES

Amongst the citizens of the Imperium they are known as *Angels of Death*. To the billion-strong bureaucracy of the *Administratum* they are the *Adeptus Astartes*. The name whispered by their foes is *Space Marine*. By any name, they are the most feared of all servants of the Emperor. Marines are recruited during routine raids amongst the hardened scum of the city-bottom. Prospective Marines, or *battle-brothers*, are subjected to the most advanced forms of training, indoctrination, pycho-surgery and bio-chem. Many initiates do not survive this process, but many more become full battle-brothers and members of the most honoured fighting organisation in the Imperium. There are a thousand different Space Marine Chapters including such renowned names as *Spacewolves*, *Crimson Fists*, *Dark Angels* and *Silver Skulls*. Each has its own base, or *fortress-monastery*, whose exact location is often a well-kept secret. Here the Marine Chapter has its weapon-forges and its harbours, as well as



its training grounds and armoury. **THE IMPERIA SPACE MARINES** boxed set comprises 17 spru of highly detailed hard styrene plastic componen - enough to make 30 mighty Marines includi special weapon operatives and personality mode The possible variations are almost endless as o photograph ably demonstrates.

WARHAMMER 40,000 £14.95
IMPERIAL SPACE MARINES £9.95
SPACE ORK RAIDERS £9.95
Models supplied unpainted

Metal miniatures are not toys and are not suitable for children under 12 years of age. They contain lead which may be ha

Not suitable for small children

WARHAMMER 40,000 ROGUE TRADER is a 288 page hardback book lavishly illustrated in both black-and-white and full-colour and including a special reference section. Citadel's new range of amazing **Warhammer 40,000** Miniatures introduces two of the galaxy's fiercest opponents: **Space Marines**, a.k.a . the Battle Brethren of the Adeptus Astartes and **Space Orks** aka filthy flesh-eating aliens. I know which side I'm rooting for, but I honestly can't blame you if you side with Kevin Adams' expertly crafted Orks because they really are little gems! In fact, they make fine fodder (sorry, opponents) for the already famous Space Marines sculpted by Jes Goodwin, Aly Morrison and Bob 'the noo' Naismith.

or swallowed.

The savage race known as Orks was probably the first alien civilisation encountered by humanity. That was a very long time ago. It is said that when Ork and Man first met upon some airless world over twenty-thousand years ago, each took a long hard look at the ceature it had discovered, drew pistols, and simultaneously shot the other dead. Things have not changed very much in the ensuing millennia. Most Ork warriors don't care too much who they happen to be fighting for... just so long as they are fighting. Humans (ughhh spit!) are the Orks *favourite* enemy, especially unarmed civilians, women and children. Space Marines (argggh spit!) are another matter... and they don't even roast good. If they can't find humans to fight Orks will resort to fighting each other. **SPACE ORK RAIDERS** contains 17 expertly crafted metal models. The set comprises 4 personality models and 13 troopers armed with bolters. Troopers are supplied with randomly assorted head varients.

ALTHIS AND AZAROTH TOO!

Being, in the main, a Report on the Goings On at the very First National Figure Painting Championships

Saturday the 27th of June began in a typical way. It was typically hazy, given the time of year. It was typically quiet in Nottingham town centre at 7.00am in the morning. It was, well... typical. Except, that is, for the vans arriving outside the Victoria Leisure Centre, the presence of dozens of blood-red T-shirt clad people bustling around the building's typically brick-red exterior and the sight of a most un-typical, grey-bearded American perched atop a ladder and struggling with a sign. It was the grand finale of the First National Figure Painting Championships - The *Golden Demon Awards*, the masterplan of Art Director John Blanche and Convention Organiser Andy Jones...

... But to put this into perspective we have to go back to the first murky days of Spring 1987. This was the first public heard or saw of the event. Each of the Games Workshop branches set about organising its own regional painting competitions as a forerunner to the main event. The response to the notices in *White Dwarf* and the promotions in the shops was most impressive. Before long, entries were being displayed in shops across the country.

The entries at this stage of the proceedings were to be judged by the shop staff. The organisational effort on behalf of the shops was crucial to the competition and Andy Jones blessed them for their mammoth contribution.

Because of the wide variety of *Citadel* Miniatures that were likely to be entered, a series of definitive categories had to be established. Eventually, the categories arrived at were Single Figure; Mounted Figure; Vignette; Diorama; Monster; Single Conversion; Dragon; and *Warhammer* Regiment.

Each branch of Games Workshop and all the other shops involved in the competition judged their Heat on the same day. The winners, who had done well to get that far, were not only awarded a £10 prize and a specially printed 'Master Painter' T-shirt, but also an invitation to the Grand Final in Nottingham. A specially cast Dwarf figure was presented to each entrant for a special Championship Category to be judged at the Final.

Each heat became a mini-event: some shops invited games personalities along as guest judges. Even by this stage it was clear that judging the finalists would be no easy task. Many of the entrants knocked out in the regional heats had amply demonstrated a fine degree of skill. The sheer number of entries was beyond beyond the expectations of those involved.

John Blanche and Andy Jones had promised that the Final would be a day that no-one would want to miss, and had worked out an unforgettable programme of events. Dozens of special guests, *Games Workshop* and *Citadel* trade stands with all the latest figures and games releases, demon-stration games and sneak previews run by games designers all formed part of the plan. Meanwhile, a *Warhammer* 'Bring and Battle', a *Bloodbowl* League and, staffed by *White Dwarf* regulars, *'Eavy Metal* Live and *Illuminations* Live displays. Both had a proliferation of famous artists to answer visitors' questions and demonstrate their skills. Both added finishing touches to the itinery for the main hall.

In a separate room, a seminar by the *Citadel* figure designers explaining how they make figures, was prepared. Games Workshop photographer Phil Lewis had to collate hundreds of slides for this event.

The stage in the main hall would be the focal point of the day for the presentation of the Golden Demon Awards themselves. The main prize, for the 'Best of Show' winner, would be presented by none other than Azaroth, Demon Lord of the Nine Hells himself!

So Saturday morning's mis-leading veneer of normality was no more than an overture to the forthcoming events. And the Games Workshop staff were busy from the word, 'Go'. Even after a late night's work on Friday, transporting all the stands, displays, public address system, game and figures to the hall, everybody kept sweating in their (successful) attempts to assemble everything and finish setting up before the official opening time of 10am.

The American trying to fix the a banner above the entrance was none other than game designer extraordinaire, the World Famous Ken Rolston who couldn't quite reach... But with a few caustic comments and a lot of colonial panache, Ken's struggle paid off and the banner was fixed. Ken had travelled over 3000 miles to get to the Awards and was not about to be beaten by a difficult six inches.

The sun had burned off the haze by the time the doors were opened. A chain-mail clad master of ceremonies in the form of Tim Pollard clambered up to the stage and announced that the Golden Demon Day was now, officially, underway...

A multitude of enthusiastic games and miniatures hobbyists wasted no time in filling the hall. The registration desk for those entering the final stage of the competition was immediately overwhemlmed. Things were off to a good (and busy) start.

The queue which formed at the registration desk dispelled any hopes of an early judging. As each entrant's details were taken, the model was placed inside a specially constructed display stand that ran down the length of the main hall. A more impressive display of skilled modelmaking and painting has probably never been seen before. Perhaps, for this reason alone, the Golden Demon Awards were already a success.

The judges were impressed not only at the admirable quality of modelling and ideas, but were also surprised at how much the styles of the work featured in *White Dwarf* and Citadel publications has caught people's imaginations. *'Eavy Metal* has evidently made a big impresion on the modelling and painting techniques employed throughout the country. It was clear that judging these entries was going to be a daunting task indeed.

The master of ceremonies was not the only person to liven up the day by appearing in costume. A stunning cast of gothic monsters had made their way down from the Mythlore Studios in Cheshire. Mythlore never fail to impress people with their astounding and life-like costumes, though the vision of of a

shambling mound trying to play one of the demonstration games (and becoming upset because he couldn't pick his cards up) must have destroyed a few people's illusions about their ferocity...

Meanwhile, the displays around the hall were provoking serious interest from the rest of the visitors. At the *Illuminations Live* stand was a collection of works by a number of famous artists. Most topical of them all was John Sibbick. His artwork graced the cover of *White Dwarf*'s tenth anniversary issue and has often been displayed within the magazine. But John doesn't rest on his laurels. Though he now devotes much time to working on the American Time/Life magazine, he spent four months putting together some stunning visual material for *Warhammer 40,000*, culminating in the explosive detail of the 'Crimson Fist Chapter' cover painting. Take a look for yourself - it's on the cover of this issue!

The ubiquitous Angus Fieldhouse, famous for his *Runequest* cover as well as the *Citadel* Goblin and Elf chariot box covers, was there along with Carl Critchlow - notorious creator of Thrud - and David Gallagher, whose work graced the cover of the last *White Dwarf*. Also present: Ian Miller, creator of the beautifully atmospheric painting for *Death on the Reik*, which is the latest in his line of masterpieces have included book covers and backdrops for Ralph Bakshi's animated *Wizards* and *Lord of the Rings* movies. Comic artist Brett Ewins brought with him much of his work from 2000AD and many readers will remember his *Kaleb Dark* for the *Citadel Journal*.

Wil Rees and Martin McKenna, proudly displayed their work from *Shadows over Bögenhafen* and *Death on the Reik* respectively - their evocative images attracting a good deal of attention. Of course our own John Blanche and Tony Ackland, who have captured the imaginations of so many gamers in the past, received their fair amount of attention along with Bil (of Gobbledegook fame), who was presiding over the stand replete with Gook-adorned bowler hat.

It was intended to have these guest artists answering questions from behind their desks in a semi-formal way, but the crowds were so big, and interest so strong in the displays and the different styles, that the artists just mingled with everyone else and chatted. Bil, Carl Critchlow, Brett Ewins and Tony Ackland, did some sample drawings, and were good enough to give some of these away to lucky visitors. Tony later mentioned that some of the visitors' own artwork was particularly impressive and showed promise.

At the *'Eavy Metal Live* stand, it was a similar story of crowds and questions for Kevin 'Goblinmaster' Adams, working on some goblins and talking about the new Citadel Space Orks and plastic Space Marines. Colin Dixon, on the other hand, was involved in painting some Normans. The main attraction here was the celebrity speedpainting competition won by Dave Andrews. Dave was, for the most part, involved in demonstrating how to build a card-stock castle along the lines of his excellent work for the Warhammer scenario packs *Blood on the Streets* and *Terror of the Lichemaster*, but was dragged away long enough to compete in this competition.

The speed painting contest had been running for all-comers during the morning. The rules were simple: All entrants were given a specially cast Orc archer, some Citadel Colour paints and a brush. They then had just 15 minutes to turn out a masterpiece, with the winner getting to keep all the other attempts! Interest was under-standably strong. And then came the turn of Citadel's figure painters themselves. As many of them as possible were rounded up for this celebrity version of the contest and were given the same restrictions. Dave raced to victory, sable brush in hand.

He still hasn't finished the castle...

Stephen Hand, the designer of *Chainsaw Warrior* was running one of the many participation games which also proved to be a success. Early on, Steve suffered from a paucity of willing participants for his demonstration of *Chaos Marauders*, but eventually word got round about the game itself, and by the end of the day people were doubling up to play this soon-to-be released card game of violence, mayhem and back-stabbing. The verdict: 'A winner!'

Third Place: Single Mounted Figure Category, Nick Sewell.

Meanwhile, Jervis Johnson was running a *Bloodbowl* League for all-comers, using some of the rules from the soon to be released *Death Zone*, the new Bloodbowl expansion set. Jervis was particularly impressed by one of the entries in the Diorama category, based on his game.

Citadel and Games Workshop also provided some of their own dioramas, purely for display. One of these was the *Warhammer 40,000* display, an awesome set of futuristic city buildings with a combat in progress between some of the new plastic Space Marines and some Space Elves and Orks commanded by the ubiquitous Rick Priestley and Jim Bambra.

Second Place: Diorama Category, Brian Moore

"But How Do We Choose One Over The Rest They're All So Good.

Winner: Single Mounted Figure Category, Paul Benson.

THE WINNERS!

SPECIAL DWARF CATEGORY

'Overall, amazing quality - it's interesting to see how many variations on one theme there can be!'

Winner: Peter Cook, from Nottingham.
'Well defined, neat and clean. Everything a good figure should be!'
Second: Andrew Walters from Leeds.
Third: Mark Page from Winchester.

SINGLE FIGURE CATEGORY

'A staggering number of figures here, on all themes, with Chaos Warriors and Chaosettes featuring predominantly!'

Winner: Alasdair Canyon from Cleveland.
'An amazing Chaos Warrior called Hard!'
Second: Mark Page from Winchester.
Third: Andrew Walters from Leeds.

SINGLE MOUNTED FIGURE CATEGORY

'A quality selection of the highest standard, with people favouring mounts other than horses, such as monsters and boars etc.'

Winner: Paul Benson from Hendon(?).
'A brilliant Orc Boar Rider.'
Second: Simon Bargery from Hants.
Third: Nick Sewell from Solihull.

DRAGON CATEGORY

'Always impressive, Dragons represent High Fantasy in it's purest form. Most submissions came with substantially modelled bases, and many conversions were to be seen!'

Winner: Brian Moore from Birmingham.
'A double headed Kegox Dragon with an Orc rider, and many more additions. A truly superb piece that had more than an undercurrent of the Orient. It had all the elements that make a superb piece of fantasy modelling - it was impressive, had a customized rider, bright colours and a scenic base. Brilliant!'
Second: Simon Bargery from Hants.
Third: Steve Blunt (from somewhere secret!)

VIGNETTE CATEGORY

'A chance to show groupings on a small scenic base. These and the Dioramas must be the collectors pieces of the future.'

Winner: Mark Evans from Leicester.
'A great Dwarf tower, which had some real thought go into it.'
Second: Steve Robinson from Leeds.
Third: Stephen Mussard from Hornsea.
And...
An Honourable Mention: Ivan Bartlett from Chatham.
'Sometimes a model stood out so much that even though it was not a prize-winner, it deserved a special mention, and so this new, extra category was added.'

Winner: Conversion Category, Steve Blunt.

Second Place: Warhammer Regiment, R Kenick.

Third Place: Vignette Category, Stephen Mussard.

Winner: Warhammer Regiment, Skaven, G Pritchard.

Winner: Dragon Category/Sword Winner Best of Show, Brian Moore.

Winner: Diorama Category, The Chalice of Doom, Ivan Bartlett.

A selection of entries for the Special Dwarf Category.

Honorable Mention: Diorama Category, Graham Pritchard.

Peter Cook.

Winner: Special Dwarf Category.

Alasdair Canyon.

Winner: Single Figure Category.

Winner: The Masters Category, Frazer Grey.

CONVERSION CATEGORY

'A chance for the true fantasy fanatic to show off his or her talents to the greatest extent. Good ideas abound as well as the truly weird!'

Winner: Steve Blunt (still from somewhere secret).
'An amazing fighting gargoyle!'
Second: Adrian Sellers from Northhampton.
Third: Gary Pritchard from Cornwall.
Honourable Mention: Chris Jones from Sheffield.

DIORAMA CATEGORY

'Mega-epic time! This was the one for the megalomaniacs of the hobby to have a go - and they certainly excelled themselves!'

Winner: Ivan Bartlett from Chatham.
'The Chalice of Doom was original, impressive and incredibly well executed - if that's the right term!'
Second: Brian Moore from Birmingham.
Third: Steve Blunt *Hi Steve, wherever you are'!*
Honourable Mention: Graham Pritchard.
'That insane conversion that seems to grow every time you look at it!'

MONSTER CATEGORY

'Devils and Demons and Things That Go BUUUURRRPP! In The Night! Balrogs were the favourites in this category.'

Winner: David Hallett from Oxford,
'A classic nasty bit of work, with a lot of time and trouble taken over it.'
Second: John James from Sunderland.
Third: David Hoole from Wakefield.

WARHAMMER REGIMENT CATEGORY

'Figures en masse have always appealed to me, and with their rythymn of movement and interplay of stance they are capable of producing effects which evoke the atmosphere of battle. This is the class where shield designs, banners, officers etc have a relevance of their own.'

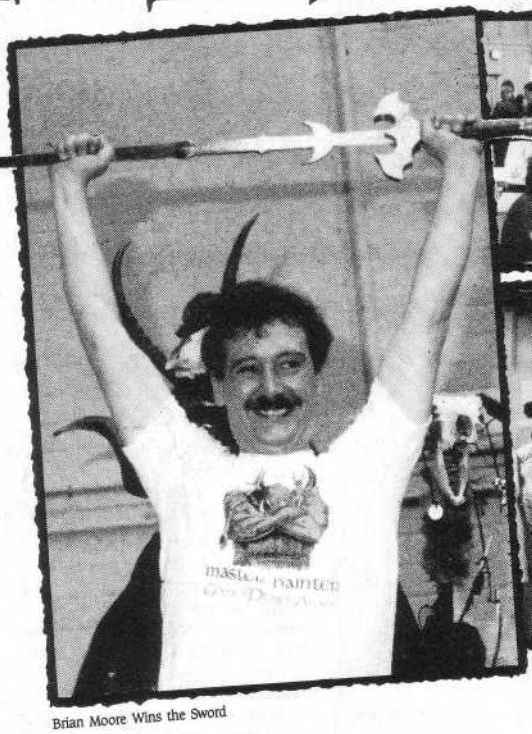
Winner: Gary Pritchard from Cornwall.
'An insane member of the public who seems to want to cover everything in psychadelic decoration. This Skaven regiment were so colourful they'd make a unit of Landsknechts look like undertakers!'
Second: Richard Kernick from Winchester.
Third: Danny Fuller from Brighton.

THE MASTERS CATEGORY

Winner: Frazer Grey
Orc War Elephant.

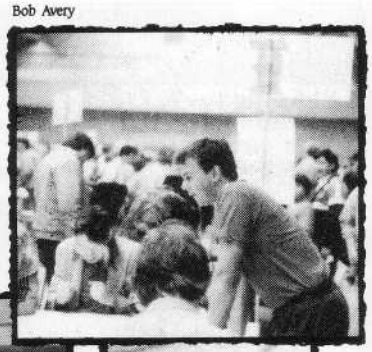
Comments by John Blanche

GOLDEN DEMON AWARD



Brian Moore Wins the Sword

Left to Right Steven Hand, Graeme Davis, Jim Bambra & Ken Rolston



Bob Avery

Illuminations Display

'Eavy Metal Live

Gary Chalk

Graeme Davis' sneak preview of *Death On The Reik* was well subscribed for all three of the sessions he ran, and was very favourably received. The perennial Gary Chalk came along as well, throwing himself into the spirit of the occasion during a wargame using Gary's own rules system.

Ken Rolston also ran a preview of his WFRP adventure *Something Rotten In Kislev*, also known as *Way Too Many Dead Guys, Dead Guys On Parade, Harvest Of Death* and... Get the idea? Despite the title, Ken designed this as more of a problem-solving adventure, and reports say that it's a good 'un!

But all this looked tame when compared to the awe-inspiring *Paranoia* display put on by Bob Avery. At one point he was seen making a normal, everyday member of the public (who just happened to have innocently decided to play in a game of *Paranoia*) lie on his back across the playing table with a blindfold on, just to be slapped around the face with a wet fish! This was *after* Bob had got the entire team of players up on the stage doing an aerobics display to some disco music, and *before* making some other poor sap strip to the waist while sitting in a big cardboard box on the table. And all done to the tune of 'I Heard It Through The Grapevine'. A strange man indeed, Bob Avery...

Away from the main hall, Jes Goodwin and Aly Morrison were giving the planned seminar on model-making, with a slide show and question and answer session, appearing unperturbed by any of the other weird happenings of the day. Also in at the seminar were Trish Morrison Nick Bibby and the Perry twins, especially primed for resistance to interrogation.

Throughout the day Games Workshop's ace photographer and all-round good guy, Phil Lewis, struggled in his temporary studio at the end of the hall in a desperate bid to capture images of the entries for posterity. The enormity of the task had our resident lensman on the move all day, but he rose to the challenge and did a fine job - as you can see from the piccies on these pages! Coo!

At around 2.30pm, the judging began. It was an arduous task for John Blanche and Bryan Ansell, one not made easier by the crowds pressing in to see the fantastic collection of talent that had accumulated on the display tables during the day.

After some considerable time, and with appropriate pomp and circumstance, John Blanche presented the Golden Demon Awards to the lucky few. Each trophy was an electroplated copy of the *Golden Demon* (designed by Nick Bibby) in gold (first), silver (second) and copper (third) positions respectively. The bases were made of marble and each bore an engraved plate with the relevant category details. Although the kudos was enough, cash prizes of up to £250 went to the winners.

Finally it was time to announce the Best Of Show Winner, the overall best entry of the competition, the model that in the opinion of the judges was the *piece de resistance* of the Golden Demon Awards. To the winner would go not only fame and glory, but the fantastic 'Golden Demon Slayer Sword', forged by the Undead, Mind-Flaying Greater Balrog Demons of the Fiery Inner Sanctum of the Lords of the 26 Furies of the Lesser Stench, or, as they prefer to be known in the phone book, *Pendragon Armourers* of Chesterfield (it's a lot shorter, you see).

Azaroth appeared, bearing the Demon Sword!

It was only then that the Best Of Show Winner was announced - the exquisitely beautiful Dragon from Brian Moore, and he came back onto the stage to receive his prize. John admitted to being somewhat over-awed by this particular model (as you can see from his notes in the 'Dragon' category). When Brian recently visited us all again at the Games Workshop Design Studio, we forced him to tell us all the secrets of his work, and acquired some good hints and tips, which we hope to pass on to you in due course.

Right at the end of the day, the Masters Category was judged by all of the other Class winners. These were entries from the modelling and gaming fraternity itself, and the reaction of all the guest judges was, 'But how do we choose one over the rest? They're all so GOOD!'

In end, however, a winner had to be chosen, and it was without predjudice to the other entries that the exquisite Goblin War Elephant from Frazer Grey won the bottle of Champers, and the charity donation of £150. Frazer, who has been known to us at the studio for some time, has a very precise style and is no mean photographer either, often taking excellent shots of his own miniatures. He very kindly made his donation to the Kevin Peat Bed Appeal for Orpington Hospital.

And that was that. Saturday once more sank back beneath its veneer of normality. It was a thoroughly entertaining day for everyone involved and revealed a whole world of previously unseen talent. Take a good look at the quality of the winning entries, and take heart - Brian Moore, the overall winner, has only been painting for *two years*! He modestly puts his ability down to constant practice. So keep working at it... sometime in the future, it may be you on the stage.

It really can only do the hobby good to have so many excellent artists out there, with such vivid ideas and imaginations. Interestingly, many entrants tried to achieve impact by going rather over-the-top with bases or the models themselves. While this worked on some occasions, it is perhaps ironic that some of the better models at the show were presented with a little less fervour and a touch more subtlety. All it requires is a little patience, some ideas, and a good brush! Eh, Mr Blanche?

Rick Priestley & Jervis Johnson

Tony Ackland

The Speed Painting Competition

Text by Tim Pollard and Sean Masterson

EUREKA

An Inventive Adventure for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay

by Paul Hargreaves

This adventure can be run as part of an existing campaign, a one-off or used a basis for a new campaign. It is set in Nuln, a city in The Empire, but *Eureka!* can easily be altered to take place anywhere within the Old World.

Unemployed

The adventurers should be unemployed at the start of what is about to unfold, either between 'major' adventures or just starting out as newcomers to the hazardous profession. As such, they will be looking for jobs of some adventuring kind, and the way to find such work in Nuln is to go to the Reik's Platz.

The Reik's Platz is crowded with merchants, labourers, soldiers, sailors, and even press gangs! It is the hustle and bustle of ordinary, every day life. All the available jobs should be seen as tedious and boring by the adventurers.

However, the Deutz Elm holds the answer. Amongst the many messages nailed to the large trunk is one that the adventurers should find interesting. It reads: *'Capable persons needed to protect valuables. Well paid, food and board supplied. Contact Uwe the Barman at the Misthaufen Tavern.'*

The Tavern

If the players wish to go to the tavern (as they should) they will have no difficulty in finding it. Most people can give them directions. The Misthaufen Tavern is actually fairly close to the Reik's Platz, and after a short walk the adventurers will find themselves outside a shabby little beershop down one of the city's many backstreets.

The barman Uwe is a fat, good-natured man, and he even gives the adventurers free beers when asked about the job. Surprisingly though, for all his generosity, it is not Uwe who wants to hire some 'capable persons'. He will smile and reveal that he is only a go-between, then give the adventurers instructions on finding a house on the Gummisteifelstrasse. The house is Der Geflugesalat and it should not take long to get there. As the adventurers leave to find out who really wants to hire people, Uwe will shout after them 'Tell them Uwe sent you!'

Der Geflugelsalat

It is about late afternoon when the adventurers arrive at the Geflugelsalat house. Clouds are beginning to gather overhead and it looks like a storm is on its way.

The house is a fairly large one on the outskirts of the city and it has some very obvious and very unusual features. From the roof a large iron pole projects skywards and another part of the roof is flat, so that it could easily be stood on. Also built onto the roof is a tall, wooden tower-like structure supporting a wide platform. This is nearly as tall as the iron pole.

The large double door has a large rope hanging down at one side of it. A sign next to the rope reads, 'Pull this please.' If the adventurers take the advice of the sign a series of bells will play a merry little tune over and over again.

Suddenly, there is a loud bang from behind the door. One of them is opened by a halfling carrying a hammer. He mutters something about 'Damn bells' and then asks the adventurers what they want. 'But just what do they think they are doing, ringing bells like that? Hmmm? Well?'

If the adventurers mention that Uwe sent them then the halfling's attitude will change completely. Smiling he will beckon them into the house. He then goes on to explain what the problem is...

The Inventor

The halfling is Fatboy Smallnose: the assistant, cook and housekeeper of the great inventor and renowned genius, Wolfgang Kugelschreiber.

Kugelschreiber is undoubtedly a genius and, unfortunately, an inventive one as well. In his secret cellar/workshop he has invented many amazing things, most of which don't work, but never mind... He has only been saved from destroying his house in various uncontrolled explosions by his faithful assistant, Fatboy.

The reason why Wolfgang Kugelschreiber has hired the adventurers is to protect some valuables, some very valuable valuables (to the parties involved). The objects in question are himself and his assistant, Fatboy. While slightly paranoid, Kugelschreiber does need protection from some thugs who are running a protection racket. Over the past week masked men have called at the inventor's house and have tried to extort money from him. Kugelschreiber wants to hire the players to do something about this problem.

Introductions

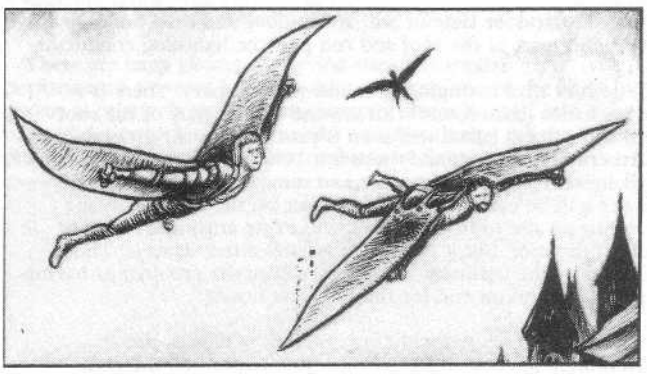
Fatboy will take the adventurers into the very neat and tidy house, but he cannot find the inventor. Muttering to himself about 'The old fool's down there again, I'll be bound...' he will take the adventurers out to a shed behind the house. Inside and down some stairs is the entrance to the secret workshop of Wolfgang Kugelschreiber...

Inside and down, the workshop (unlike the house) is a mess. Chemicals bubble in strange vats and bottles, and gurgle through twisty glassware. Obscure mechanical devices litter the floor in various stages of completion - or have they been partly dismantled? Bits of firearm are scattered about the place, along with small piles of gunpowder. It's a workshop, laboratory, smithy, alchemist's lair and smell factory crammed into a pint pot. Anyway, in the centre of all the confusion is a large object covered by a sheet. As the adventurers enter a man appears from under the sheet. His hair is grey and unkept and his eyes are wide, bloodshot and have a manic look about them. This is Wolfgang Kugelschreiber.

On seeing the characters, Wolfgang beams at Fatboy and then says to the players, 'So Uwe has sent you. GOOD! FANTASTIC! VUNDERFUL!!' After Fatboy has calmed him down a bit, Wolfgang then goes on to say 'Ah, vell, my good fellows, do you vant to vork for me or not?'

As Fatboy will have filled the adventurers in on the details of the job, they should be able to answer him with a 'Yes'. As soon as they agree to work for him, Kugelschreiber takes an instant liking to them. He will grin from ear to ear, tell Fatboy that 'Ah, I told you zo!' and offer the characters 100GCs each, payment on completion of the job: 'Ven you haf rid me of zese troublezome fellows...' Kugelschreiber doesn't want to have any of his furniture broken, so he insists that the adventurers do not fight on the premises. Other than that 'minor' restriction, they have a free hand in the matter.

With business completed, and just as the adventurers are about

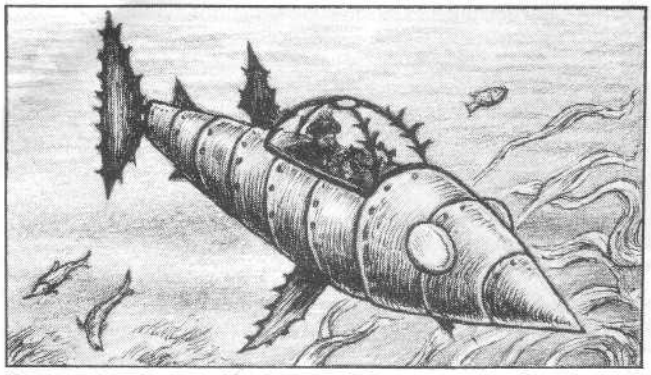


Illustrated by Martin McKenna

to leave and organise their rooms, Kugelschreiber will say, 'Vell now. You are in my employ, zo you can tell me what you zink of zis!'

With a flourish, the inventor pulls the sheet off the large object in the middle of his workshop. Beneath is Kugelschreiber's latest invention: a submersible! It is a large, bulbous, brass and bronze and iron construction. It obviously takes much of its design from the appearance of a fish. Paddles on either side of the submersible take the place of fins and it has glass port-holes in place of eyes.

However, it hasn't occurred to the absentminded genius that the 'untervatership', as he calls it, is much too large to get out of the doorway or up the steps...



Frying Tonight

After a late (but excellent) dinner cooked by Fatboy, the adventurers are shown to their rooms. The weather outside, which was showing signs of becoming stormy, has now broken. Kugelschreiber does not go up to bed because of this; the inventor is going to stay up and 'Ach. Experiment vith ze elements, you know.' Kugelschreiber and Fatboy will be quite happy if the adventurers choose to mount a guard during the night, even though they think (and will say) it is unnecessary.

As the adventurers retire to bed the inventor returns downstairs to his study to set up his experiments which in main concern the harnessing and storage of lightning, hence the conductor on the roof. However, something else is afoot tonight. Perhaps, after all his meticulous work, his plans are about to go awry...

A spy has been sent by the government of the city to find out if the inventor is working on anything that has a value to the military. It will be well after midnight when the adventurers will be disturbed by a commotion on the ground floor. Between the rumbles of thunder and the patterings of the rain can be heard crashes and shouts.

As the adventurers reach the bottom of the stairs a shadowy figure rushes by them and run up the stairs. Kugelschreiber appears at the door of his study and shouts 'Stop zat man!' The chase is on!

Helmust Weishund, the spy, will try to escape at whatever cost. He was not expecting the inventor to be up and about, and he has found out little of interest to his employers. Finding no way out on the first floor he will climb the ladder to the roof. Outside it is raining (rather heavily) and there is a rumble of thunder and a flash of lightning. The storm is nearly at its height as it passes over Nuln.

The ladder leads to the flat part of the roof, which is wet but can be stood on in safety. As soon as the first adventurer emerges from the trapdoor Helmut will attack once and then jump up to the higher part of the roof and run past the lightning conductor.

The roof here is sloping, wet and very slippery. There is a 50% chance (each round) that anyone on this part of the roof will slip off and fall. There is an 8 yard drop to the ground. Furthermore, every round there is a 15% chance that lightning will strike the conducting pole and some of the lightning's power will be conducted via the water on the tiles to anyone standing on the roof. The shock will cause anyone affected to fall off the roof, but it doesn't cause any direct damage. Those affected by the lightning do, however, face the problem of having their hair stand on end for the next few hours!

There is no escape for the spy, even if he defeats the adventurers in combat on the roof. Fate (or, rather, the GM), should intervene; perhaps Helmut could fall off the roof or maybe an innocent bolt of lightning could go astray? Incidentally, if the latter is the case then anyone touching the body will receive 1-3 *Wounds* and will fall unconscious for 6 rounds.

If Helmut is searched (possibly while the searcher is wearing some sort of insulating gloves) there is little to be found on his body. The only item of interest is a tiny tattoo of the Griffon of Nuln on his chest, just above his heart.

The adventurers should be properly mystified by all these happenings. This is as it should be, as this incident is mainly to stop them getting bored. That Helmut was a government spy is something that the players could not realise or find out and they should be puzzled by his appearance and the reason for the break-in. On the other hand, the characters have been instrumental in Helmut's death. Governments - especially the secret parts of governments - have long, long memories...

The dead, tattood body of the man can provide no answers and neither can Kugelschreiber, so the adventurers should retire to bed tired, disgruntled and wet.

The Morning After

The morning after the adventurers are awoken by the smell of frying bacon and eggs. This morning, if asked about the events of the previous night, Kugelschreiber will admit to knowing nothing about the man. He will reveal, however, that thanks to the fact that he was in his study, the 'Svinehund' took nothing of value.

Kugelschreiber will help tend any wounded characters from the previous night. He will also inform the adventurers that the extortionists will return for their money tonight.

Inventions Galore

For the rest of the day Kugelschreiber will demonstrate some of his many inventions to the adventurers. These include the infamous *Kugelmatic Turkey Plucker*, the *Kuglematic Mobile Fire Extinguisher*, the *Kugelmatic Underwater Breathing Device*, the *Kugelmatic Fast Draw Scabbard* and several others. Some of Kugelschreiber's inventions are detailed at the end of the adventure as they might be useful in some situations.

Feel free to add a few extra Kugelmatic devices. The sillier an invention, the better. The adventurers can have fun experimenting with the items, or equipping themselves with various wierd and wonderful gadgets. Kugelschreiber will be only too happy to help with any 'field testz you vant to carry out.'

Messing around in the workshop can easily take all day (with meals provided at the appropriate times by Fatboy). This is fine, as the extortionists are due to arrive this very night.

Extortion is a dirty word...

Night falls in Nuln. Just after 8pm the door of the Geflugelsalat house bursts open. Framed in the doorway are five men; all are cloaked, hooded and masked.

Two of the men are carrying loaded crossbows, while the others carry clubs. When they enter the house, they will spread out and cover the occupants. Kugelschreiber will turn on any adventurer who shows signs of fighting and remind them of their obligations as his employees: 'Behafe yourzelf! Zis is my house und zere vill be no fighting here!'

Shortly, a sixth man enters the house, attired in the same fashion, but carrying a drawn sword (he likes to look dramatic). This is the leader of the extortionists, Manfred Kessler. He will demand the 'fee' from Kugelschreiber and tuck it into his pouch when it is handed over. With an elaborate and sarcastic thank you, he and his men will withdraw.

Denied the opportunity to fight them here and now, the easiest way for the adventurers to deal with the extortionists is to follow them back to their base and discover their identities. The identities of those involved can then be reported to the authorities. As a small added bonus, the characters may find out where the extortionists hide their money!

If this plan doesn't occur to the players the GM can suggest it through Kugelschreiber. After all, he is a genius and following the criminals is essential to the plot... 'Vell! Vat are you vaiting for? Get after zem! Ach! Haf I employed dumpkofs? Zmallnose! Zmallnose! Bring me drink und zupper! Go on, zen, you. AFTER ZEM!!!'

Shadowing

The criminals will take the money (75GCs) and vanish into the night. They have several more calls to make tonight and following them could be dangerous. Skills such as *Shadowing, Silent Move Urban, Concealment Urban* and even *Night Vision* will come in useful.

It will be easier for the criminals to spot the adventurers if they stay in a group so they should spread out or have intervals of a set distance between them. If anybody thinks of doing this they should be awarded a couple of EPs just to keep them happy. *Hide* tests need be made only once as the extortionists are confident that nobody will dare to follow them.

It will take the criminals approximately 1 hour to return to their base. They will make two stops along the way: one at an inn and another shortly afterwards at a merchant's house.

Finally, to any watching adventurer's amazement, the criminals arrive at their base of operations. With a last casual look around, the six men open a door and enter the City Watch barracks in this area! This is truly something for the characters to think about: corruption in the ranks of the City Watch, upholders of the law.

If the players attempt to rush the small barracks then an alarm will be raised by one of the extortionists, who are, of course, now the City Watchmen attached to this barrack block. The players will have be forced to flee as the hue and cry is raised.

If the adventurers report these bent Watchmen to their superiors - or any other Watchmen - they will simply not be believed. Try to make it clear that adventurers are suspicious wanderers in the eyes of the Nuln law and perhaps have them arrested. Whatever happens, if it is possible get the players into a chase. They will be the would-be hunters who have become the hunted.

Manfred Kessler will do his best to outlaw the adventurers in Nuln. Once this has happened the adventurers can reveal any criminal activity they like, but no court in Nuln is going to believe the word of a bunch of scruffy adventurers in preference to that of trusted and respected Watchmen...

A Chase is Always Fun

A chase is always a good way of inducing good roleplaying and inspired thinking in players, thanks to the pressure of trying to get away from trouble! The adventurers will, in all probability, want to return to Wolfgang Kugelschreiber's house. They should report what they have found to him at the very least, and warn him that the City Watch may also be after him.

The actual chase back to Kugelschreiber's home could be a game of hide and seek between the players and their pursuers, who are quite a lot of the Watch garrison. Alternatively, it can be run as a straightforward chase with the Watchemn, led by Manfred Kessler, hot on the heels of the adventurers who are now 'wanted for questioning'.

If the first situation is the case then *Hiding* tests are the order of the day. Players can easily be helped in working out what is going on and where they are by being given general descriptions of the immediate area: 'You are in a narrow back lane, with houses set close together' and the like. This should help players think of places to hide such as roofs, shadowed doorways, alleyways, or in canals, hay wains, empty wagons, underneath tramps or whatever. EPs should be awarded for ingenious thought at this point.

If a simple chase occurs, the adventurers should not get caught just yet, but they should be frightened and run ragged by the Watchmen. After all, there's nothing like being chased by a horde of screaming Watchmen to get the adrenalin going.

Eventually the players must return to Kugelschreiber's house, if only to collect any belongings they have left. They may also be forced to return to Der Geflugelsalat because the City gates are guarded by Watchmen who are on the alert.

Escape

When the adventurers return to the house and inform Kugelschreiber of what is happening he will get very excited. He will shout all kinds of things about the need for fast escape, but will do little but run around and pull out most of his hair. The Watchmen will arrive shortly after the adventurers tell Wolfgang that they are coming.

To be exact the Watchmen will arrive at the house of the inventor 2 turns after the arrival of the adventurers. They will start shouting and banging on the door.

By the time this is happening, Kugelschreiber and Fatboy will have run out of the back door and down to the cellar. As they leave, Kugelschreiber will turn and shout at the characters: 'I vill escape in meine Untervatership. Don't vorry, ve vill meet again'. If the adventurers scoff at this, perhaps it might be a good time to remind them that the wall of the cellar workshop is also the wall of the canal. Kugelschreiber also happens to have a good stock of gunpowder down there...

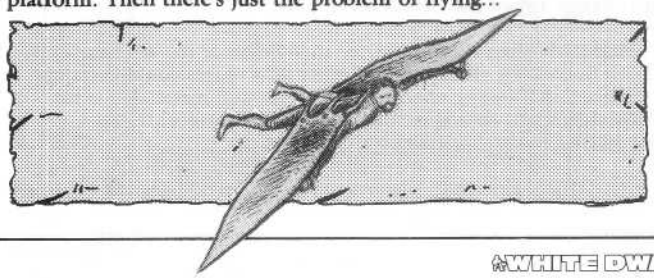
Unfortunately, there is only room enough for two people in the Underwatership, and Kufelschreiber and Fatboy are the only ones who can operate it properly. The adventurers will have to think of something else to do. The main doors of the house can be bolted but it will not take long for any Watchmen to break through. (The door has *Toughness* 3, *Damage Points* 12).

There are several alternatives for the players to consider at this point - that is, apart from a battle to the death against the entire city Watch garrison! Escape is a distinct and interesting possibility. Escape out of the back door is unlikely to succeed, because the streets are patrolled and also the Watchmen will try to get in through the backdoor when they arrive. It has *Toughness* 3, *Damage Points* 6.

Another, and far more interesting escape route, is over the rooftops. If the Watchmen are delayed by locked doors and other barricades the adventurers will have a good start in any ensuing rooftop chase. However, there is a problem: the Nuln city wall. There is no conceivable way the adventurers can get over the city wall without a great deal of fighting. This might be feasible if the adventurers are experienced, strong fighters and slightly insane. But to save the characters from any suicidal, pitched battles there is a third option...

On top of the tall tower-like platform on Kugelschreiber's house are some fascinating devices that he has developed: hang gliders! These primitive and potentially lethal inventions of Kugelschreiber provide some unusual possibilities for any would-be pilots amongst the adventurers.

There are hang gliders of varying sizes but similar performance, covered by a tarpaulin. Piloting one of the hang gliders is relatively simple: the character straps himself into the hang glider (which takes 3 rounds) and then jumps off the platform. Then there's just the problem of flying...



A roll must be made immediately to determine whether the pilot (using the word in its loosest possible sense...) manages to control the glider. To gain control the adventurer must roll under the total of his *Dexterity* plus half his *Initiative* scores. Adventurers who are over-encumbered suffer a penalty of 5 on the control roll for every 50 encumbrance points they are over their limit.

If the pilot loses control, roll a D6 and consult the following table:

Die Roll	Result
1,2	Descend 15 yards
3,4	Descend 10 yards
5,6	Descend 5 yards

After rolling on this table the character must re-roll for control of the hang glider - always assuming that he has not crashed into the ground! Damage when hitting the ground is calculated as a fall from the appropriate height. Keep a note of what height each hang glider is at the end of each turn.

To begin with the characters will be on the platform which is 20 yards above the ground. When they jump off the platform they will immediately descend 5 yards before they can gain level flight.

After the initial roll, rolls for control should be taken whenever the pilot of the glider wishes to control it in some way. Whenever a player rolls for control and gains it he can choose to either ascend 5 yards, descend 5 yards or bank to the left or to the right.

It is possible to turn into the wind (which just happens to be blowing from the direction of the nearest bit of City Wall), which means that the hang glider will rise by 5 yards rather than fall, but it may very well stall and crash to the ground at the end of the turn. Re-roll for control to avoid this, with a bonus of 10. As the adventurers will be flying toward the City Wall, it is likely that they will be quite high when they pass over it. Stalls from great heights do give a chance to recover, as a hang glider will only drop 25 yards (maximum) in a single round.

In flight the glider can cover 30 yards per round and so it should take only approximately a turn to escape over the city wall which is 25 yards high.

If the GM is slightly sadistic then it is easy to introduce houses, towers and other things that the players would have to manoeuvre around during their flight from the city. 'Flak' from the Watchmen below can be introduced such as arrows, stones or even the odd catapult or ballista shot could be used.

Once the players are beyond the walls, the City Watchmen will not pursue them, as they are no longer within Nuln. Landing, and subsequent events, can be a whole new set of adventures.

Epilogue

The players of this adventure should end up with about 100-200 EPs or whatever the GM feels is appropriate as bonuses can be awarded for unusual and ingenious play.

If the adventure is played in roughly the way it is designed the player characters will probably end up as outlaws in Nuln. This doesn't have to be case, as the final events of the adventure take place at night: obtaining accurate descriptions of the adventurers is going to be hard for the Watch. If the characters do become outlawed, though, they might be hunted by the odd bounty hunter or two. This can easily create storylines for any short fill-in type adventures... If, on the other hand, you want a more satisfactory conclusion to the adventure it is, as always, possible to change any of the details given here.

Kugelschreiber should survive the climax of the adventure. He is an interesting character, and other adventures could certainly feature him. Finding obscure ingredients and materials for his experiments or spying on other inventor's secrets are just a couple of possibilities for this character.

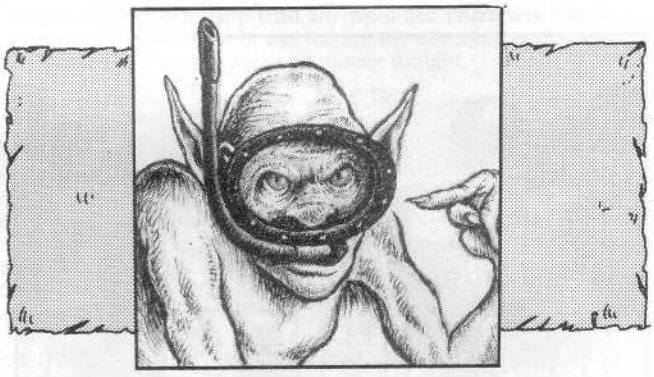
The characters might not have much monetary reward for this adventure, but if nothing else they could get jobs in a travelling fair as death-defying fliers.

Appendix 1: Kugelschreiber's Inventions

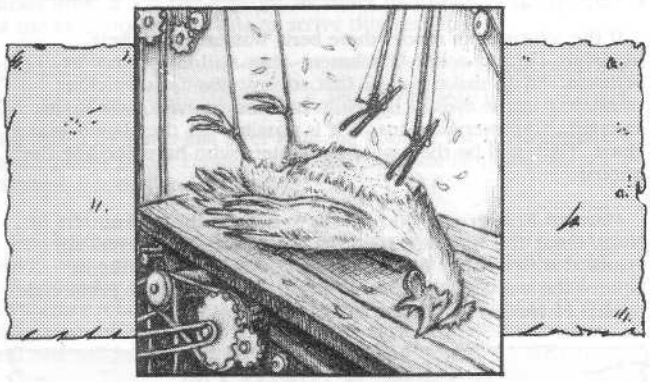
Any interesting inventions you can think up can add colour to any adventure, but most of them simply should not work. Anything too like high technology would ruin the atmosphere of the game, and it is important to remember this. Items such as machine guns or robots should be avoided, but if you've got to have them make sure that they are cumbersome, dangerous to the user and rarely work!

Kugelmatic Fast Draw Scabbard
This is a scabbard (for standard swords only) with a kind of spring device in the bottom of it. When the device works correctly (50% chance) then the user gains +10 on his *Initiative* for the first round of combat, providing the sword was in the scabbard. When the *Kugelmatic Fast Draw Scabbard* malfunctions then the sword shoots out of the scabbard and lands 1-10 yards away.

Kugelmatic Mobile Fire Extinguisher
This is a wheeled trolley with a key, a pump and a hose attached. When the pump is used, brown and smelly chemically-treated water shoots out of the hose. This will extinguish any fire it comes into contact with in exactly the same manner as ordinary water. The gloop will also stick to anyone it hits and reduce their *Initiative* by 15. It has a range of 4 yards, and won't wash off properly for 2 hours. The mobile fire extinguisher requires two operators (one to pump and one to point the hose).



Kugelmatic Underwater Breathing Device
A primitive snorkel, which does actually work quite well. This could be useful to anyone who wishes to escape by swimming.



Kugelmatic Chicken Plucker
Just don't ask.

Kugelmatic Turkey Plucker
A bigger version of the above...

Underwatership
Details of this are not really necessary as the adventurers should not get to use it, or even see the inside of it.

Gliders
Information on the gliders is given in the last section of the adventure.

Appendix 2: Characters

Wolfgang Kugelschreiber

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	29	24	2	3	8	46	1	59	24	97	30	67	37

Skills: Astronomy; Cartography; Engineering; Luck; Metallurgy; Chemistry; History; Heal Wounds; Heraldry; Super Numerate; Speak Additional Language: Classical.

Notes: Tends to be scruffily dressed and never cares how he looks; slightly absent-minded which is why many of his inventions don't work - he usually forgets a component.

Fatboy Smallnose

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	29	36	2	2	6	52	1	43	20	37	23	43	43

Skills: Cook; Sing; Animal Care.

Notes: Tends to mutter to himself a lot.

Helmut Weishund the Spy

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	49	45	3	4	9	50	2	46	39	49	69	29	49

Skills & Trappings: As Spy (see *WFRP p105*) plus sword.

Watchmen-Extortionists

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	37	40	3	3	9	36	1	29	29	29	29	29	29

Skills: As Watchmen (see *WFRP p43*).

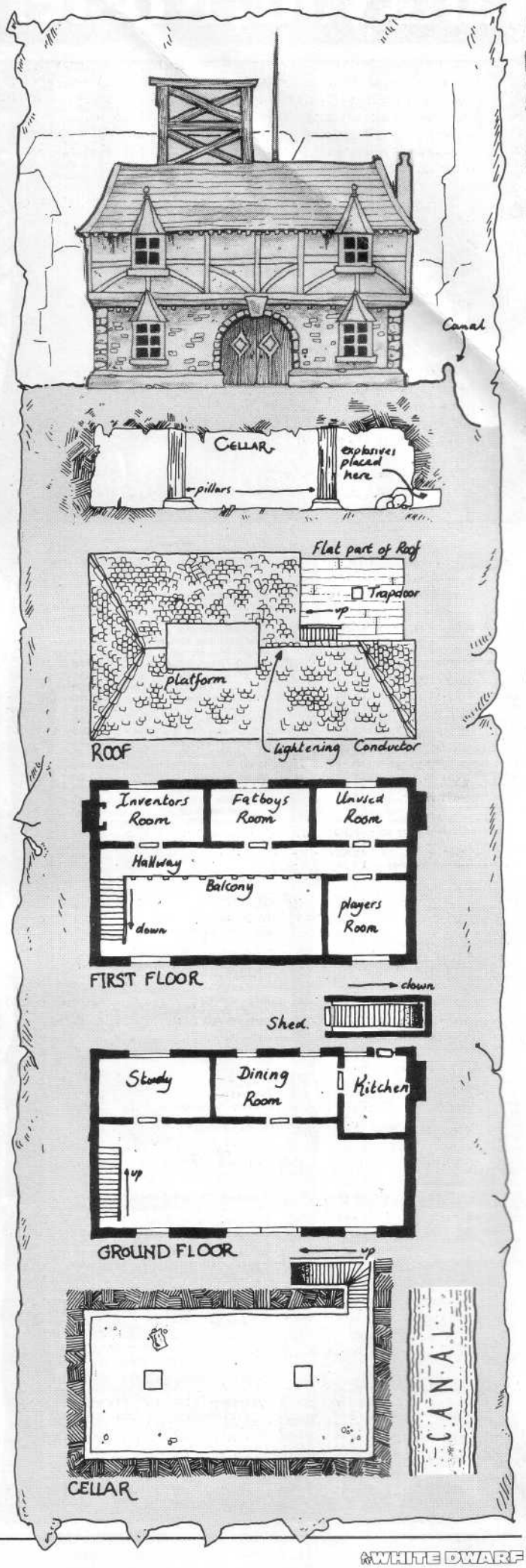
Notes: When the Watchmen are masquerading as extortionists their trappings are as described in the adventure text. When they are acting as Watchmen their trappings are the same as in the rulebook.

Manfred Kessler - the leader of the criminals

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	45	30	3	4	9	39	2	29	40	29	29	29	29

Skills & Notes: As his henchmen above.

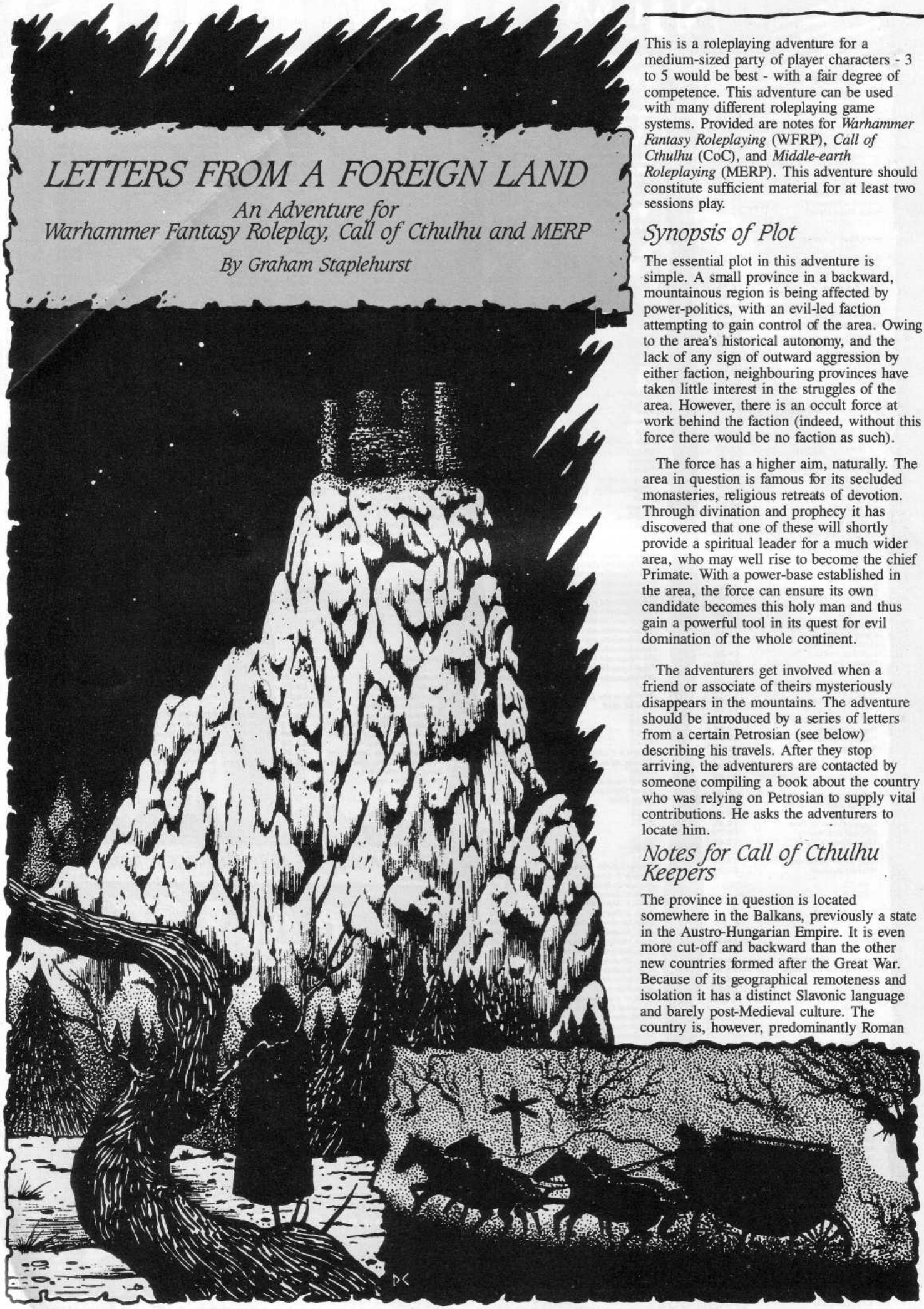
Paul Hargreaves



LETTERS FROM A FOREIGN LAND

An Adventure for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay, Call of Cthulhu and MERP

By Graham Staplehurst



This is a roleplaying adventure for a medium-sized party of player characters - 3 to 5 would be best - with a fair degree of competence. This adventure can be used with many different roleplaying game systems. Provided are notes for *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplaying* (WFRP), *Call of Cthulhu* (CoC), and *Middle-earth Roleplaying* (MERP). This adventure should constitute sufficient material for at least two sessions play.

Synopsis of Plot

The essential plot in this adventure is simple. A small province in a backward, mountainous region is being affected by power-politics, with an evil-led faction attempting to gain control of the area. Owing to the area's historical autonomy, and the lack of any sign of outward aggression by either faction, neighbouring provinces have taken little interest in the struggles of the area. However, there is an occult force at work behind the faction (indeed, without this force there would be no faction as such).

The force has a higher aim, naturally. The area in question is famous for its secluded monasteries, religious retreats of devotion. Through divination and prophecy it has discovered that one of these will shortly provide a spiritual leader for a much wider area, who may well rise to become the chief Primate. With a power-base established in the area, the force can ensure its own candidate becomes this holy man and thus gain a powerful tool in its quest for evil domination of the whole continent.

The adventurers get involved when a friend or associate of theirs mysteriously disappears in the mountains. The adventure should be introduced by a series of letters from a certain Petrosian (see below) describing his travels. After they stop arriving, the adventurers are contacted by someone compiling a book about the country who was relying on Petrosian to supply vital contributions. He asks the adventurers to locate him.

Notes for Call of Cthulhu Keepers

The province in question is located somewhere in the Balkans, previously a state in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It is even more cut-off and backward than the other new countries formed after the Great War. Because of its geographical remoteness and isolation it has a distinct Slavonic language and barely post-Medieval culture. The country is, however, predominantly Roman

Illustrated by Dave Carson

Catholic rather than Eastern Orthodox and there are numerous monasteries as mentioned above. Not every detail of the country is supplied but you might want to imagine it as a sort of tainted, slightly grubby Ruritania (as in *The Prisoner Of Zenda* by Anthony Hope). Using this 'twee' setting will help to put players off the idea that there is some deeper evil at work here.

The evil force is a malevolent undead spirit, whose personal aura and power are sufficient to warrant being rated with the lesser gods. This being, once a Prince of his people around the time of the great Council of Nicaea, entered into Hell-knows-what pacts with some Great Entity and survived, creating an indestructible *Ring of Eternity* through which his essential spirit has persisted down ages of time. Now worshipped by an evil cult, he manipulates his worshippers and supplies them with the capability to perform evil deeds.

Petrosian is a Russian emigré, a scholar and a bit of an explorer-cum-adventurer himself. He writes fairly lurid tales of his exploits which sell well, and the contact who asks the player characters to find him is a newspaper publisher, Courtney St John. He will provide funds for travelling and a decent bonus for a good scoop.

Notes for WFRP Gamesmasters

The setting for this adventure is the eastern reach of the Middle Mountains, south of the Forest of Shadows, in Ostland. The area concerned is a backward province, surrounded on three sides by mountains and on the fourth by the Forest, and nominally ruled by Grand Prince Hals von Tasseninck of Ostland. The evil cult concerned is an ancient branch of the worship of Kháine, driven underground long ago. Some 700 years ago, a Necromancer and an Alchemist forged a bond of evil alliance and set up their kingdom, terrorising the population. Both were slain by a hero from Kislev - or so the story goes. Actually, the Necromancer survived, after having stolen the *Ring of Eternity* from the Alchemist. He went into hiding and developed a religion centring on himself as a manifestation of Kháine, preserving his body through the Ring, to become a demi-Liche.

The tiny kingdom, now a simple barony, is known in some circles for the religious retreats devoted to Mórr. These often supply religious advisors (called seers) to the Empire's courts. It is into one of these monasteries that the Necromancer's tentacles have stretched.

Petrosian is a noted scholar, originally from Kislev. He became a noted, if eccentric, tutor of history in the university of Altdorf and his writings were enjoyed for their fresh and even humorous approach. He also explored and investigated in person, the better to understand and discover history. Lately he was sponsored by his university to visit the barony and report back, and the adventurers are contacted by his principal (Veangthur the Learned) to try and locate him.

Notes for MERP Gamemasters

The adventure is set in the massif of the *Ered Nimrais* (White Mountains), just west of Morthond Fief. The high vale and slopes were claimed by a devout lord of the Faithful who loved the mountains as an echo of great peaks of Númenór. The fief has had little to do in the great affairs of Gondor, producing neither warriors nor statesmen, but the first lord, who died childless, nevertheless left a legacy in the form of an endowment to support three houses of contemplation. Here men and women congregated in the silent worship of Eru.

But deeper in the mountains, where none went is an even earlier legacy - a temple built by Black Númenóreans, worshippers of Melkor, a copy of that constructed in Armenelos. And here a dire priest was rewarded for his sacrifices by immortality - in the form of a Wraith. When all his companions fled after the Fall (most to Umbar, some to the service of Sauron in Mordor) he was left to await his own death. But a messenger came from Sauron, bearing what he called the *Ring of Eternity*. Thus he endured, even through Sauron's own fall and rise.

Petrosian is a lesser Dúnadan from Lamedon who has joined the Sages' Fellowship in Minas Anor (Minas Tirith). Currently undertaking a major history of the worship of Eru after the Fall, he has been to many centres, most recently to the distant barony. When no word comes from him for many weeks, a Sage contacts the characters to investigate. The map given here extends from the frontispiece map in *Erech & the Paths of the Dead*, an adventure supplement from ICE.

The Letters

The following are extracts from the letters Petrosian has written to the characters. He writes about once a week, and delivery takes as long as you assess for the countries and distances concerned.

1 ...The carriage service was punctual and surprisingly comfortable; the border patrol stopped us once but it is good to know that the region is protected. The flower-decked 'capital' was wonderfully rewarding, for greenery was everywhere; roses peppered the shrubs along the pavements and entwined themselves around the gateposts and fences and women with brooms swept the side streets with their tunnels of trees, although litter appeared non-existent.

There is a shrine here, but it is a place of the people, with scarved peasant women crossing and re-crossing the vast mosaic floor. I took a lit candle, had a tumbler-full of water ladled from a bucket, indulged in the luxury of climbing stone steps to gaze upon a long-gone corpse, and partook of a gooey conglomeration of sticky food which I was requested to 'try'. It was all homely, cosy and spiritually comforting.

2 ...And so we came to Sibiu, after cutting through the mountains and waving to the rural folk along the wayside, sitting like over-sized dolls in worn jackets and enormous, brightly-coloured skirts. Some we passed along the dusty road, high-tailing it in dirty old narrow-wheeled carts with an arched cover over the top and a poor thing of a horse pulling away to goodness knows where. There are many of these wanderers of a more ancient race than ours. Some stay along the town fringes and infiltrate the fairs and markets and some 'travel' over the back roads living in wanderer villages but still part of the populace.

3 ...I went to a shrine and stood with the congregation through the service, while nuns chanted scriptural responses... I left for a lunch in a typical peasant's home. I took the dishes out into the kitchen, tip-toeing past grandfather snoozing on the rude sofa and arranging fresh food on a tray. It was a glorious day, full of memories. For all along the road the houses were fascinating; storks nesting in thatch, and attic rooms whose arched brow-windows gave them the appearance of eyes watching you - a most uncanny sight.

4 ...Sighisoara was my nuncheon stop, where 975 long, slanted steps led up to the hill-top shrine, a former sanctuary for the populace fleeing from the hated, impaling Wild Horde. Little boys made their silent way up the cobbled path on their way home.

This fortress-town with its concentric walls holding in its heart the shrine and the tiny stone rooms built into the rock have sheltered the long-suffering inhabitants from enemy raids. In the square, the circular beds of flowers hug the stone in formal patterns as variegated as a patch-work quilt.

5 ...Suceava in the high vale is the lush province of black earth, where every inch is utilised and every furrow ploughed by horses or bullocks. Suceava is a joy, for it is the old princely residence of the baronial rulers, where the citadel was entered by Mirkal the Brave without opposition; henceforth it was united, although the Empire ruled closely in later centuries. I must say, I admired Mirkal and the other baronial heroes; Petru Rares's statue at the Monastery of Moldovitar is imposing, with its long locks and six-pointed crown, and the Monastery of Mirkal showered me with gifts.

6 ...In the southern region, the painted monasteries of Voronet and Sucevitar are genuine masterpieces of the barony's art and architecture. With their illustrations of scriptural stories and historical scenes they are unique; everything is there, from battle scenes and sieges to a genealogical tree. The fires of some hell pit flame around struggling souls and live coals scorch their tormented bodies, while animals give back fragments of human bodies to supplement those which have been savaged. It is a pity that the art of fresco painting appears to have been lost, and that Voronet lies in such ruined splendour, its cloisters silent but with the memory of echoing treads.

7 ...it is a fascinating country, chock full of things - the wanderers, flowers, woodlands, towns and villages. Friendly folk help one on one's way and absurd happenings tint everyday life with the colour of gold. The mountains succour me and shed upon me their beguiling majesty and their arboreal splendour.

How can one adequately describe the magic of those deep-forested mountains in the pedestrian language of a letter? Superb and magical, they display their gentle slopes in a wealth of varying shades of green, for sweet chestnut, flowering acacia and tall pines follow the trails up to the gorges and down again to the plain...

8 ...I have returned to the mysticism of the Monastery of Mirkal, but something has disturbed my researches. In the cells and hallows of this ancient building a strange cry awoke me last night. There was much to-ing and fro-ing, the patter of slippered feet, and the screams ended. None here seemed to be aware of anything more than a brother seized with a fit, but his words were not incomprehensible to me:

Kha-ly iest'churya 'es tron'n u-kha-ly;
Dÿurian 'os nazg kechkar!
Aî kha-ios en all'alluchyren 'es chthon'n nam-ly.

This message of doom from the Realm Outside has shattered the feelings of peace I had until now. I am always looking over my shoulder and seeking something to fear - but I know not what.

This is the last letter from Petrosian. The fragment of language given above is in an arcane language (*WFRP*: Magick (Necromantic); *MERP*: Black Speech) and is the calling up of a spirit in the name of the *Ring of Eternity*. Reveal this only to player characters with knowledge of the relevant language (a skill check may be required).

Event One: Commencement

The adventure starts as described above, with the player characters being contacted by someone connected professionally with Petrosian. The person is aware of the friendship between the characters and Petrosian and knows they have been receiving letters from him. Alternatively, you could have the PCs hired by the person and given all the letters above.

The characters have to journey to the barony where Petrosian was travelling and studying. Its location is given in the *Introduction*. The backward region is relatively cut off. A nearby town can be reached by various means of commercial transport, but from there on the journey will be foot, horse or pack beast.

In addition to dashing straight off to the barony, PCs may want to do a little investigating. Reveal pertinent information from sources relevant to the game & setting you are using, in addition to information you deem they could find out from that given in the *Introduction*. You may also like to have them discover some conflicting legends and stories about the region (for example, in *CoC*, the tales of Count Dracula).

Encounters along the way should be appropriate to the rural country side through which the adventurers travel. They may meet footpads and con-men; if it is winter, there may be wild beasts roaming closer to civilised areas, such as wolves; other encounters should be taken from the usual procedures for generating them in your game (in *WFRP* you might have some Beastmen and/or goblinoids in the 'gloomy depths' of the Forest of Shadows). This stage of the adventure ends when the PCs reach the barony - probably meeting one of its poorly-equipped border patrols first.

Event Two: Border Patrol

The border patrol is an uncouth bunch of six men-at-arms headed by a sergeant. All speak only their own barbaric dialect - even those knowing a similar language will have only half the normal chance to understand the men. The sergeant actually understands some Old Worlder/Common (*CoC*: any Slavonic language) but if PCs want to talk to him, they will first have to persuade him to be patient.

If the characters seem at all suspicious, the sergeant will order his men to search their belongings. If anything suspicious is found, he will attempt to arrest the party, otherwise he will do nothing. Try to make the sergeant as sinister as possible. He is greasy and unkempt in appearance, speaks with lisps and snarls, and wears a grubby neckerchief embroidered with what look like small yellow-and-black eyes (actually just a pattern).

If the characters allow themselves to be arrested, their belongings will be confiscated (any money being divided out between the men, the sergeant keeping anything of obvious value) and they will be

escorted to a stone hut beside a house where the patrol (and another) reside, about 2 miles from where they were arrested. The hut has a small window and a single door which is barred and locked from the outside. There is some strewn hay and a wooden pitcher of water inside. The roof consists of heavy timber baulks and tiles.

Anyone protesting will be beaten up by three of the men. Later that evening, the men will celebrate their good fortune and get themselves drunk on the loot. If the characters do not take this opportunity to escape, starve them for a couple of days, then have them released, common belongings being returned to them.

Event Three: To The Monastery of Mirkal the Brave

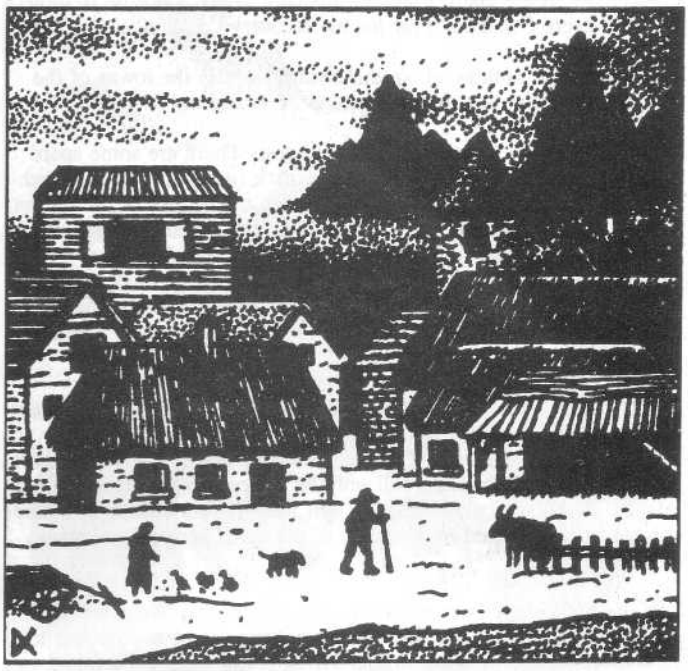
This monastery is the last place Petrosian was known to be at, and the characters should think to head here first. Directions are not difficult to obtain. The best place to go would be one of the shrines along the route, for the more learned priests who tend them speak other languages (*WFRP*: Reikspiel/Old Worlder; *CoC*: French, German, Russian; *MERP*: Adûnaic, Sindarin, Dunael) known in the 'outside world'. If the characters show great devotion, generosity or manage to influence a priest, they may be provided with a guide to the monastery.

Use the descriptions given in Petrosian's letters to give a flavour of the tiny, secluded land to the players. On the way to the Monastery they should be able to find food and lodgings if necessary, although it is just 20 miles or so wide. Remember that it can get cold in an elevated region such as this, and sudden squalls of rain, sleet or snow are not uncommon even during the more pleasant months of the year.

Other events and encounters may be as you wish. The 'towns' spoken of by Petrosian are little more than walled villages (*WFRP*: use a much-compacted version of the village on p333-335; *MERP*: for an example, see Caras Gwindor in *Dagorlad & the Dead Marshes* or *Carandor in Trolls of the Misty Mountains*). However, the towns are currently subject to occasional small-scale riots as those people under the sway of the Evil One try to wrest control from and undermine the authority of those currently in power. Most of the time, the characters will be ignored by the locals, unless they specifically interfere.

The characters should certainly meet some of the wanderers (*CoC*: gypsies). They might react in various ways - for example crossing themselves and hurrying out of the way. This should certainly get the wind up the players. The wanderers speak their own tongue, which is one of the influences on the barony's strange dialect. They may also try to give a warning to the PCs, but it is likely to be incomprehensible.

If the characters are relatively weak, a 'wise woman' from a group of wanderers may press a small charm made from bones and herbs on one of the PCs at random. They may accept or reject it. It will ultimately prove useful against the wearer of the Ring - if they remember it!



The Monastery of Mirkal the Brave is a low, broad square edifice. Four short towers with conical roofs form the corners, connected on three sides by a wall and covered cloister, and on the fourth by the dormitory and other rooms used by the monks. One of the towers is square and slightly larger than the others, housing six men-at-arms who keep a watch on the surrounding vale. They are often busy dealing with small raiding groups (bandits, wild tribes) or wild animals which might endanger the monks and their servants working the fields.

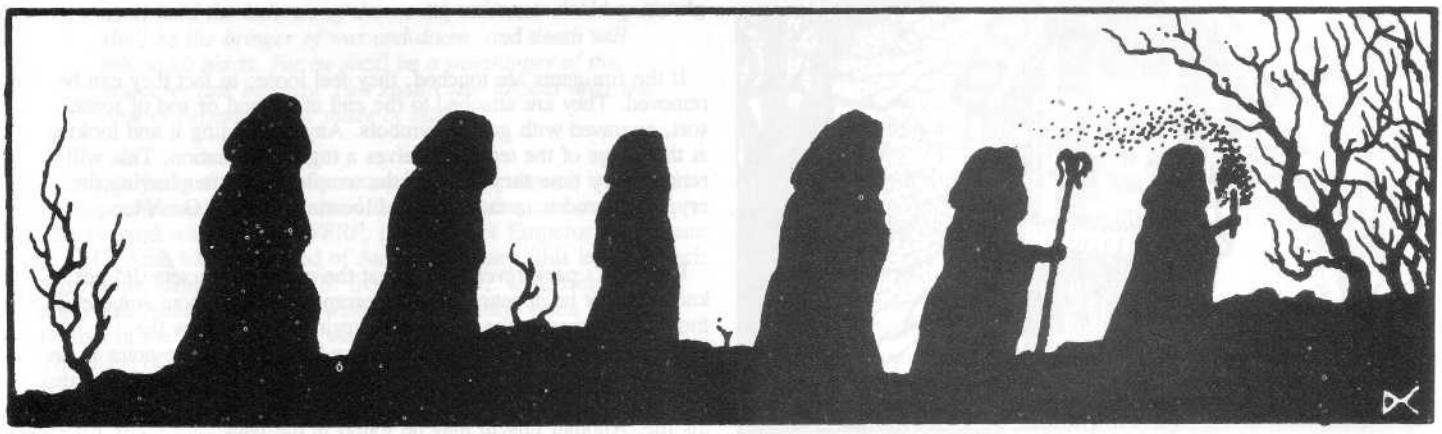
Within the walls are lawns and some flower beds (two devoted to growing medicinal herbs) and, in the centre, a shrine where the brethren go for their religious devotions. The walls of the shrine are painted with splendid frescoes (see *Letters*); within, it is austere and has a great aura of spirituality.

Event Four: Petrosian's Last Stop

Petrosian's itinerary can be followed to some extent to plot his progress around the barony, ending at the Monastery of Mirkal the Brave. Here, the player characters will be able to find someone that speaks their language, as there are some 35 learned brothers here, under Father Maynir. He will talk freely to the PCs and tell them:

(a) that Petrosian left the monastery, saying he was going to visit the letter office in the capital, then go on to the higher vales (which, he did not specify) before returning to the monastery.

(b) that he left a pack with extra clothing and a few other things to collect later. He will let the PCs take this if they make an easy *Fellowship/Influence* roll (*CoC*: any applicable communications skill).



(c) that the brother Petrosian heard to scream is now confined to a small room in the guard tower for his own safety, since he is subject to very severe fits. They pray for his recovery constantly.

(d) he knows nothing about the disturbances in the towns of the barony, nor about any threats, demons or whatever.

Petrosian's pack contains little of interest. There are some spare items of clothing, a bedroll, a gnarled stick (used for walking) and some books, rather old and out of date, on the history of the region. In one of the books are some pressed flowers. These are the same as those in the wanderer's charm (if anyone has it, make an *Observe/Spot Hidden/Perception* roll/check to notice this), and can themselves be bound into a minor charm. They could also help the PCs to find more of the same plants growing in the wild; they are not uncommon.

The 'mad' brother will give no more information to the characters although they should be allowed to see him if they make a *Fellowship/Influence* roll. If anyone wears or openly carries a charm, he will be calmer, but this will only be noticeable to Father Maynir. Also, if they look around his new cell, they have a chance to notice some marks scratched on the back of the door, perhaps making a symbol.

If the books have been examined, characters may make a check against *Library Use, Intelligence* or whatever seems appropriate to remember a page showing similar symbols (they are to be found as a motif in the the frescoes at the Monastery of Voronet). Father Maynir may also be able to help with this. If the PCs do not discover this information, they may ask at the letter office in the capital (Mieräch).

Event Five: The Ruins of Voronet

The road up from Mieräch to Voronet is a good track as far as the shrine marked on the map (*WFRP*: shrine to Mórr; *CoC*: a tiny church; *MERP*: old Dunael shrine with standing stones). From then on it is but a path used only by the few farmers and wanderers who still travel the high vales. Wheeled vehicles cannot pass at all easily. The path gets steeper and less distinct until the gorge is reached.

Huge cliffs lower on the far side. On this side the path winds round the spur to a tiny village on a high dale the other side of the peak from Voronet. Its roofless walls are easily seen from the path, but harder to reach. Some clambering may be necessary. Parts of the path are marked by steps cut into the rock.

If the characters obtained their information (that Petrosian went to Voronet when he said the 'high vales') from the letter office, the Evil One will have learnt of their plans and will send a party of peasants to waylay them. The group consists of eight countrymen, armed with pitchforks (in *WFRP/CoC* one also has a crude firearm). They will try to ambush the party but are not too difficult to spot if a watch is being kept.

Neither will they press an attack too heavily, fleeing if several are injured or an alarming counter-attack is made (with magic or efficient firearms, for example). The peasants will remain completely silent throughout (other than grunts of pain or dismay) and will not talk if captured. In the latter case they will appear extremely frightened.

The ruins of Voronet are smaller than the Monastery of Mirkal the Brave. A narrow dormitory building is linked by two walls to the shrine/church making a rectangular cloister. The whole structure is built upon a narrow shelf on the sloping hillside; around are the broken remains of other terraces where fruit trees, vines and other crops were grown to support the brethren. The dormitory building has lost its roof but the gables walls still stand, if somewhat crumbled. The older shrine is in better condition.

Nothing of interest can be found in the dormitory or cloister areas, save the fact that many of the weeds and plants growing there are less than welcoming: nettles, deadly nightshade, pale lilies and madwort (*MERP*: see *Erech and Paths of the Dead* for the latter). By the walls of the shrine in contrast pimpernel, edelweiss, boneset and vervain can be found.

In the shrine, the walls have retained their marvellous paintings, although slightly faded from their original glory. Nothing remains of the furnishings. There are niches in the solid walls which once held candles or lamps, and detritus litters the floor. If the far end of the shrine is inspected, the characters should notice that the altar stone (one large block) has been split in two and there are signs of charring. If the characters can move either portion of it (a very hard Strength check/roll), they will discover a small hollow in the flagstones in which lies an unrecognisably burnt body, which has been dead for some time.

This is the body of Petrosian, although without very special help the player characters will not know it. However, they may guess if they discover a secret door in the back of a niche to the left of the altar. This stone slab swings in when a catch is depressed to reveal a flight of steps down within the thickness of the wall. At the foot of the stair, some 20' down, is a room carved from the solid rock, once the crypt of the shrine. Lying to one side is Petrosian's abandoned pack.

The walls are carved: three have been defaced beyond recognition but a few sections echo the frescoes painted in the shrine. The fourth wall has harsh images of an entirely different style. It is titled in an arcane language (see notes on *Letters*), which translated might read 'The Evil/Enemy One/God(?) Dances With The Black/Dark Spirits'. In the centre of the carving is the image of a black sepulchre or temple, surmounted by a beacon of black fire: actually shards of a glittering black stone like jet.

If the fire gems are touched, they feel loose; in fact they can be removed. They are attached to the end of a wand or rod of some sort, engraved with golden symbols. Anyone holding it and looking at the image of the temple receives a tugging sensation. This will return every time they think of the temple, even after leaving the crypt. The rod is in fact a way of locating the Evil One's temple.

Petrosian's pack reveals little that the player characters did not know, except he appears to have become paranoid about some evil force developing in the barony and trying to overthrow the authorities - and perhaps spread beyond its borders. He notes in an unfinished letter that he does not trust anyone in the towns, and that he has been set upon twice, the second time only just escaping with his life. Another charm may be found in the pack.

If the characters are in the vicinity of the Monastery when darkness falls, you may have them encounter some minor form of undead, such as a ghoul or zombie. It should not be too difficult to overcome if they face it, but immediately after defeating it, everyone should make a *Spot Observe/Hidden/Perception* roll/check to see if they notice a pair of bats or night birds wheeling away and flying off in the direction of the ruined temple, *5*.

The characters should be motivated to find the temple; if necessary add passages to Petrosian's unfinished letter detailing his belief that there is an evil cult centred at the temple of the crypt carving, and where he believes it to be. If they do not find and use the wand, they will take longer to find the temple and will have to risk a greater chance of encounters with wild beasts in the mountains.

Event Six: The Temple

No path leads to the Temple. It sits in a freezing hollow almost 9,500 feet up, 4,000 feet above the vale of Suceva, hidden at the head of a narrow U-shaped valley. There are only ruins here now, sharp edges of black stone marking the lines of walls and a teetering quarter of its once splendid dome. Within is a circular slab once used for sacrifices: they were burnt alive in a brass brazier.

Anyone stupid enough to repeat the words of the mad brother (see *Letter 8*) in this place will summon up the Evil One, who will try to either destroy the characters immediately or turn them to his purpose. If he seems to be failing, he will disappear after inflicting as much damage as possible (including making the rest of the temple crumble about their ears).

Behind the ruins of the temple a small, squat structure extends from the mountainside, partially buried by falling scree. Upon investigation, the outline of a door can be found in its otherwise smooth sides. Clearing away the stones allows the door to be opened - either prising it with some strong, narrow implement, or by saying 'Open' in the arcane language. There is no handle.

On the other side is a single room, unlit by window or lamp but smelling pungently of a noxious substance. Upon a pedestal is a brass thurible or censer, beside it a brass lectern upon which a heavy-bound book with brass clasps sits. The clasps are magically locked and cannot be opened. The room feels oppressive and all lights are only half as effective as normal in here.

If the thurible is lit (it is half-full), it will glow, lighting the room with a lurid violet. It will also cause the book to spring open, and a plume of smoke to gather over the thurible. Anyone with mediumistic, clairvoyant or divination talents, skills or abilities can see into the smoke. If they do so, the book will riffle through its pages to some blank ones and a quill will spring up from the binding for them to record what they see/hear/divine. Otherwise, if someone concentrates on a subject, the book will turn its pages to a relevant passage. The following should be somehow revealed to the party:

> *When the time of Stone comes and the clouds gather in the heavens shall come a leader of the Faith from the high retreat. He shall come with glory and enlightenment on the one hand, and with darkness and deceit on the other. He shall hold the balance of the world, and cast it down. He shall be the bringer of war and doom, and death will follow his skirts. For he shall be a worshipper of the murderer and insanity. This shall come to pass after the time of Ferrand in the place of Mirkal.*

Despite being written in the arcane language, anyone holding the rod from Voronet can understand it as, of course, can any diviner. The Ferrand referred to is *WFRP*: the father of Emperor Karl-Franz I; *CoC*: Archduke Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary (this is the French form of the name); *MERP*: (S: from fëa-rand, 'wandering spirit'), apply this meaning how you wish, eg to the time when Sauron returns in the Third Age, or when the Nazgûl are seen abroad again. The place of Mirkal is obviously the Monastery of Mirkal the Brave. *WFRP/CoC*: Note that use of the divinatory procedure will lead to some small Sanity loss.

Event Seven: Return To Mirkal's Monastery

On leaving the chamber of prophecy described above (from which nothing can be removed without it immediately crumbling to dust) perceptive characters may notice a furtive figure. If they try and follow or sneak up to it, they will see someone in a cowled hood fleeing. The figure is obviously sure of its way and moves faster than the player characters can follow. This is Herisan, the Evil One's disciple at the Monastery. The PCs' task now is to return to the Monastery and unfrock the evil brother, whose identity they will have to discover for themselves.

Upon their return to the Monastery, they will have to first persuade Father Maynir that they are not demented, and that he really does have a renegade amongst his brothers. They may show him items from Petrosian, the black rod, etc. In addition, Herisan has grown worried about the mad brother and has had him killed, although Father Maynir believes he battered himself to death in a fit.

Next a test will have to be devised; this might be as simple as a spell to detect the presence of evil, or undergoing a strict devotion to the divinity worshipped in the shrine, or trick questioning (as with *CoC*'s Psychology skill). Naturally, Herisan will not let himself be captured by this if at all possible, escaping to the Monastery's graveyard and luring the PCs after him. Make this after dark. . .

Herisan's true nature is revealed. She is a woman posing as a brother, and using her multifarious skills to seduce brothers and make them willing slaves. She has thus gained freedom of movement (to visit the ruins of the temple and speak with the Evil One) and power within the monastery, and is much relied on by Father Maynir (not one of her conquests). Naturally, the other brothers who do her bidding will confuse any tests the characters try to perform.

She has a fair range of clerical skills herself but, more importantly, has been given a *Staff of Necromancy* by the Evil One so that she can summon up and control various sorts of undead. If the player characters try and attack her, she will defend herself with as many nasty critters as you feel appropriate. Such a fight takes place at night, and the characters will get little help from the brothers (except perhaps Father Maynir) - indeed, those devoted to Herisan might frustrate attempts by the characters to reach her.

If the PCs are closing in on her, she will break the Staff, destroying herself and tearing a rent in the fabric of Space. To the characters, it appears that the air turns a tinted red, and a ghoulish visage leers out of the sky, hundreds of feet tall, directly over the shrine. If the characters remember what happened at Voronet, they should head for the crypt.

Event Eight: The Crypt

Father Maynir (if still alive) will admit that he hasn't been to the crypt for several years; nothing important is stored their except a few old records of the Monastery put there during a tidy of their library by his predecessor. If it is entered now (again through a secret door and a flight of carved stairs), the characters will be met by an icy blast.

This immediately starts to gnaw through them (reduce Initiative, CON, hits, etc as appropriate) unless a save (*Willpower/Channeling*) is made. It is at this point that the charms may be useful, aiding this and subsequent saves/checks. At the bottom of the steps is a sight to cause *Fear* (a difficult save here to cross the threshold of the crypt, and for *CoC* another Sanity Roll) - a personification of the Evil One.

Here in the confines of the underground chamber they must battle the Evil One using their wits and skills. The following things may affect its ability to manifest here: magic weapons, spells and incantations of banishment (or dispelling, annihilation etc.), the charms mentioned above, prayers or holy rituals (Father Maynir might be able to help) and so on. A few things will be distinctly hazardous, such as possession of the black rod from Voronet, which gives the Evil One total control over the possessor.

Meanwhile, the Evil One will be attacking the player characters with his icy blasts, illusory foes and terrible sights, trying to drive them insane. The crypt has been adapted for his purpose like the one at Voronet, with the scrolls and vellums cleared to make room for a small altarstone. The Evil One might be able to animate some of the scrolls made from cured animal skins (treat as a swarm). These will be easily destroyed by fire.

The aim of the characters should be to survive until they can force the Evil One back where he belongs. Once this is done, they might conclude they have done their task. But they should heed the words of Petrosian closely, for did he not mention the *Ring of Eternity*? This will preserve the Evil One for a later time, to rise again with new disciples, if they do not find and destroy him. And now is the time, for he will be weak. It should become clear that they have only defeated a manifestation of his made possible by the Staff's energy as released by Herisan.

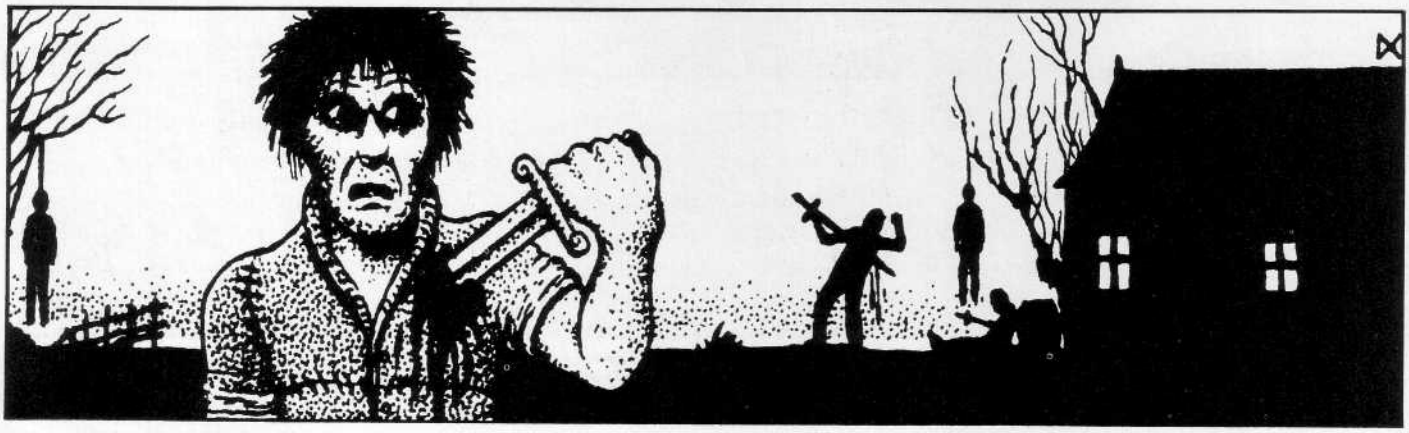
Event Nine: Grasp Eternity!

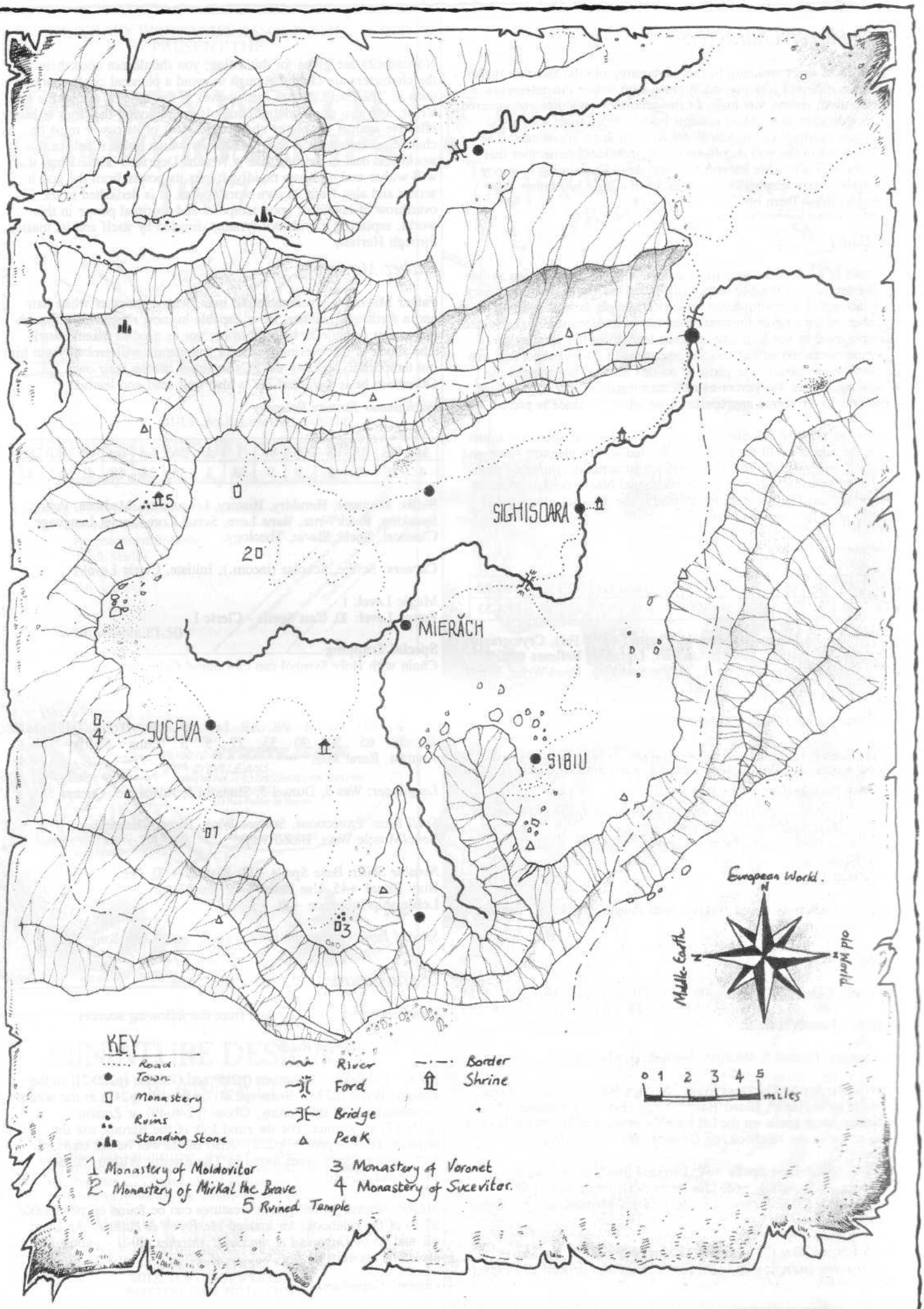
The Evil One has had his remains transported by Herisan to the shrine in Mieräch, the barony's capital. From there he has used a hypnotic influence to gain control of many people living there and tried to upset the rulers. Now his needy spirit calls upon his worshippers to regenerate his energy - by sacrificing their own. Naturally, this is so against the natural inclinations of most of the population that they are resisting the death wish covering the town. But a few are not strong enough and hurl themselves off buildings or onto knives. Some even slaughter their families first. The characters must act swiftly to prevent the Evil One from arising!

The shrine in Mieräch has no crypt but several stone tombs line the walls, and it is one of these they seek. Anyone making a *Willpower/ Resistance* roll/check can force the black rod to locate its remains, otherwise it may be given away by townsfolk killing themselves upon it or clustering near to protect it, even though they unwittingly reveal its location. Some of the characters will have to stage a diversion to draw off any defenders whilst someone opens the tomb and removes the Ring from the hand of the Evil One. Naturally, it will take an extreme *Fear* check to do this, as it is even more hideous in reality than its apparitions and projections (and yes, it's time for another *CoC* SAN loss).

This practically ends the adventure. The townsfolk who have been influenced by the Evil One will be confused and dazed for some time after its destruction, but will not take any retributive action - indeed, they may even come to see the folly of their worship and thank the player characters for saving them from probable death.

The ruling authorities and the brothers of the Monasteries in the area may also give some gift to the party for helping rid the barony of this evil threat. In *CoC* there will also be a SAN gain for a successful conclusion to the adventure.

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European World.
Middle-Earth
Old World
KEY
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Standing Stone
River
Ford
Bridge
Peak
Border
Shrine
0 1 2 3 4 5 miles
1 Monastery of Moldovitor
2 Monastery of Mirkal the Brave
3 Monastery of Voronet
4 Monastery of Sucevitor.
5 Ruined Temple

Non-Player Characters

The lack of strict structure in this adventure, and the fact that there are three different role playing systems with which this adventure can be used, means that many of the people or creatures encountered are not detailed here. Most systems have sources from which you can draw 'normal' or 'standard' statistics for such encounters. The descriptions in the text should serve as guidelines; remember that with these less notable encounters, you should be aiming to annoy the player characters and wear them down a little bit, rather than trying to finish them off.

Herisan

Herisan is a woman disguised as a man. She has been posing as one of the brothers of the Monastery of Mirkal the Brave for some years, and has gotten the confidence of Father Maynir as well as seducing a number of the weaker brethren. She knows the location of the ruined Temple used by the Evil One and has learned of her 'destiny': to become the leader of her religion and draw the world about her into confusion and death. She plans to do this for her true master, the Evil One, whom she perceives as a manifestation of a horrible god (use whichever seems appropriate if no other guidance is given).

Herisan is about 36. She stands 5'6" tall, and has short black hair after the nature of all the brothers. She has a very pleasant voice and manner, and will help the characters whilst actually confusing them wherever possible. She wears the traditional black, cowled robes of the Order and bears a staff occasionally; she also has a concealed dagger with her almost always.

Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	40	44	4	3	9	58	1	41	45	56	41	59	53

Skills: Arcane Language- Magick, Charm (+10% Fel), Crytography, Disguise, Divination, Identify Undead, Lightning Reflexes (+10% I), Luck, Magical Sense, Meditate, Public Speaking, Read/Write, Scroll Lore, Secret Language- Classical, Seduction, Sixth Sense, Theology.

Careers: Initiate, Seer, Charlatan, Cleric Level I, Cleric Level II.

Magic Level: I
Power Level: 22, Cast Spells - Cleric I, Cast Spells - Cleric II

Special Trappings:
Staff of Necromancy - Has an energy reserve (as *Jewel of Power*) of twenty points usable for any of these spells:
Summon Skeletons/Skeleton Champion
Stop Instability
Hand of Death

Dagger of Kháine - magic weapon with Poison Attack, +2 damage and Fear.

MERP

ST	AG	CO	IG	IT	PR	AP	Lvl	PP	OB	AT(DB)	Hits	MM
77	75	45	71	95	96	63	7	28	65da	No(5)	55	15

Animist, Lesser Dúnadan

Languages: Dunael 5, Westron, Sindarin 3, Morbeth 3

Spell Lists: Sound/Darkness Ways*, Surface Ways, Contaminations*, Bone/Muscle Harm*, Blood Harm*, Organ Harm*, Creations. (* indicates some spells on the list have the reverse effect of spells on a similar list in the rulebook, eg Contaminations=Purifications.)

Notable Skills: Base Spells +14, Directed Spells +34, Thrown Weapons +45; Acting +65, Use Items +57, Perception +55, Stalk/Hide +55, Seduction +50, Ride +42, Meditation +40, Read Runes +27.

Special Items: Dagger (+15 and x2 spell multiplier); Staff of Necromancy (summon up to 28 levels of skeletal undead (max level 7) per night).

No statistics are given for this being; you should not need them if the characters are careful enough to avoid a physical confrontation with it. The Evil One has great power in the spheres of illusion and terror, and also mind control/compulsion, although the latter is less effective against the player characters. Most of its power must be channelled through the *Ring of Eternity* which holds it half in this world and half in the next like a Wraith. Deprived of the Ring, it will wither and dissipate rapidly. It gets its power from the god it serves and also from its own worshippers. It is dedicated to the overthrow of lawful or good temporal and spiritual power in this world, replacing it with evil tyranny directed by itself and its master, through Herisan.

Father Maynir

Father Maynir is a venerable old man, with a shock of white hair and a forthright manner. He is capable in most situations, although not as fast or agile as he used to be, nor as used to manual work. The shock of discovering Herisan's true nature will probably put him out temporarily, leaving the PCs to attack her on their own. Otherwise he is a fighter! He is also well read and learned.

Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	26	31	2	3	9	58	1	35	38	68	41	62	42

Skills: Etiquette, Heraldry, History, Linguistics, Meditate, Public Speaking, Read/Write, Rune Lore, Scroll Lore, Secret Language - Classical, Speak Slavic, Theology.

Careers: Scribe, Scholar (incom.), Initiate, Cleric Level I

Magic Level: I
Power Level: 10, Cast Spells - Cleric I

Special Trapping
Chain with Holy Symbol can cast *Stand Calm* once per day.

MERP

ST	AG	CO	IG	IT	PR	AP	Lvl	PP	OB	AT(DB)	Hits	MM
71	38	65	50	90	53	77	5	5	25ma	No(0)	33	10

Animist, Rural Man

Languages: Wes 5, Dunael 5, Sindarin 5, Adânaic 5, Quenya 5

Spell Lists: Protections, Surface Ways, Direct Channeling, Bone/Muscle Ways, Blood Ways.

Notable Skills: Base Spells +10; History +50, Perception +50, Holy Ritual +45, Use Items +45, Read Runes +35, Leadership/Influence +10.

Special Item: Chain with holy symbol, casts *Calm Song* 2/day.

Useful Sources

Other encounters can be taken from the following sources:

CoC: Third Edition Rules

WFRP: Rulebook - Beastmen (p216) and Goblins (p220-21) in the Forests; Boars (p233), Bears (p232) or Wolves (p247) in the wilder mountainlands of the Barony; Ghoul (p248-49) or Zombie (p251-52) at Voronet. For the rural folk of the Barony, use the standard Human profile (p222). Also useful will be the standard NPCs and military types found in **The Enemy Within** (handout sheets and p27-30).

MERP: Normal Middle-earth creatures can be found on p86 (Table ST-2) of the rulebook; for undead see *Erech & Paths of the Dead* p11 and 35 or *Dagorlad & the Dead Marshes* p10-11 - ghouls and skeletons are suitable.

Graeme Staplehurst

Bounden To The See Of Rome

Religion in Blood Royale By Paul Cockburn & Jervis Johnson

We are so much bounden to the See of Rome that we cannot do too much honour to it... for we received from that See our Crown Imperial.

Henry VIII, King of England 1491-1547

Now that you've played your first two or three games of *Blood Royale* and realised what a doddle it is, we thought we would add a few more ideas, just to give the game a few little extras. So, courtesy of Paul, 'Aren't History Books Expensive' Cockburn and Jervis, 'You Can't Expect Me To Write Rules About That' Johnson, here are some rules for adding the Church, the Papacy and a lot more scope to your game...

The Medieval Papacy

Long before they started kissing airport tarmac, Popes were noted for a very different attitude towards the countries of the world. They thought they ruled them. Kings and Emperors were in charge of taxes and armies and cities, but the Church was the word of God, and the Pope was the spokesman. Therefore much of the history of relations between the Church and the secular states of Europe was fraught with difficulty.

The theory that Kings held their thrones only with the blessing of the Papacy took off from about the 8th Century, and solidified in the 12th. By the time of Innocent III (1198-1216), the Papacy was in head-on collision with the Empire (Germany). By the 1300s, successive Popes has convinced themselves that they had the final authority on just about anything, and meddled constantly in the affairs of sovereign powers.

Against this, medieval monarchs struggled to impose their own authority. The arguments raged over church lands, tithes, the appointment of bishops and the Pope's demand that only those monarchs blessed by the Apostolic See ruled with the authority of God. In some countries this was tantamount to undermining the King's ability to rule.

On the other side of the coin, the Papacy had great weaknesses of its own. Its independence was threatened by the lack of a secure territorial base, and by its need for loyal monarchs prepared to fight crusades. Spain and France both dominated the Papacy for long periods of time. Also, if the Church fell into disunity, the way was open for the foundation of anti-popes, who set up rival organisations, often duplicating all the functions of the original. The internicine strife this caused left the Church powerless to intervene.

For a game like *Blood Royale*, the full complexities of the medieval Church cannot be detailed. But it is possible to cause players the right kind of anxiety by introducing a few simple rules that duplicate some of the actions of the Church. And so...

Rules For Religion in Blood Royale

Setting Up

At the start of the game, one player should make up a character sheet for a 'Pope' character born in 1250. The Pope is not controlled by any player at the start of the game. In addition, each player receives a 'Cardinal' character (assumed to be the Uncle of the King) born in 1365, with Strength and Charisma scores of 0 and a Constitution of +2. See below for rules on Cardinals.

The players will need to make a deck of *Vote Cards*, for use if a *Conclave* is held. Use an ordinary pack of playing cards and sort out 3 'fives', 2 'tens' and one ace from the deck, representing 5, 10, and 15 point Votes respectively.

1. The Clergy

When a male character reaches the age of 15, the controlling player may decide to have him join the clergy. Older characters may also join the clergy, as long as they are not married. This should be recorded by writing a C next to the Prince number space on the character sheet.

Characters who have joined the clergy may not marry, and do not receive a Prince piece when they reach the age of 20 (if they already have a Prince piece, it should be removed from the board). Any titles they may have are retained and the character still modifies rebellion rolls, taxation etc for the Province that goes with the title.

Neither the king, his eldest son or his son's eldest son may join the clergy. A character in the clergy may not become king and must be passed over. There is no penalty for passing over a character in this way. Any character, as long as he is not the Pope, may renounce the clergy and return to being a 'normal' character at any time. Characters who have renounced the clergy may rejoin later.

i. Bishops

A male character in the clergy may be made into a Bishop during the Marriages part of the Dynastic Sequence. The player controlling the character pays 30 crowns to the Papal Treasury to make the character into a Bishop, and can then record the fact in the Titles space on the character sheet.

In the taxation part of the Interphase, each Bishop receives 5 crowns, plus or minus the character's Charisma, which may be added to the controlling player's treasury.

ii. Cardinals

To become a Cardinal, a character must already be a Bishop and must be at least 30 years old. Cardinals are appointed by the Pope in the Marriage part of the Dynastic Sequence. If the pope is controlled by a player, that player decides which eligible characters become Cardinals. If the Pope is not controlled by a player, use the following procedure to find out if a character becomes a Cardinal:

1. All the players should record which of their characters they nominate to become a Cardinal. This information should be written on a piece of scrap paper and revealed simultaneously.
2. Players must roll two six-sided dice for each character they have nominated, needing 10 or greater to succeed. This dice roll can be modified by +1 or -1 by each Bishop who was not nominated that turn, and by each Cardinal. Any player can influence the dice roll, but for each character whose influence is used they must pay 5 crowns to the Papal Treasury before the dice are rolled.
3. If the player succeeds with the dice roll, the nominated character becomes a Cardinal, which should be recorded on the title space of the character sheet.

In the taxation part of the Interphase, each Cardinal receives 5 crowns, plus or minus the characters Charisma, which may be added to the controlling player's treasury.

2. The See of Rome

i. The Papal Treasury

Money given to the Papal Treasury should be recorded on a piece of scrap paper. The total is not secret, and any player may look at it at any time. In addition to money received from the players for Bishops and Cardinals, the Pope receives 2 crowns from *every* Province on the board during the Taxation part of the Interphase (unless the player controlling the Province decides to keep the money for themselves, see *4. Heresy!*).

After taxes have been collected, one player should roll a six-sided dice and multiply the score by 10. This total is then subtracted from the Papal Treasury (to a minimum of 0) to represent the expenses incured in running the Papacy (those missionaries cost money, you know!).

ii. The Pope

The Pope is treated just like any other character, except he may not marry or be given titles. The Papacy never controls any territory, and may never trade. When the Pope dies, a *Conclave* must be held to elect the new Pope, which may result in the Pope being a character controlled by one of the players. Such Popes are known as *Controlled Popes*.

Controlled Popes obey all of the rules that apply to normal Popes. In addition, they must renounce any and all titles they hold. A player who has a Controlled Pope can do any of the following in the Marriages part of the Dynastic Sequence:

The Controlled Pope may decide which eligible characters become Cardinals.

A Controlled Pope can refuse to ratify a coronation. Until the new monarch pays 50 crowns to the Papal Treasury, they suffer a -1 penalty to their Charisma.

A Controlled Pope can refuse to ratify a marriage if one of the characters getting married has been married before. The marriage cannot take place (and the marriage contract will not come in to effect) until the marriage is ratified.

A Controlled Pope can allow characters with the same Dynastic name to marry, with the exception that children may not marry either of their parents, grandchildren may not marry their grandparents, and brothers and sisters may not marry each other. Both characters in such a marriage suffer a -1 modifier to their Charisma, and any children they may have suffer a -1 modifier to their Constitution.

Ignore the Crusade event card while there is a Controlled Pope. Instead, the Controlled Pope may call a Crusade as and when he wishes. If a Controlled Pope calls a Crusade, he may not call another for at least 10 years. The Crusade works in exactly the same way as the Crusade on the Event Card.

iii. The Conclave

When a Pope dies, a Conclave must be held immediately to elect the new Pope. Use the following procedure:

1. Each player may nominate *one* Cardinal character they control who is at least 40 years old to be the new Pope. In addition a 'non-player' Cardinal character sheet should be drawn up, rolling characteristics as normal. This character will be 45 years old.
2. The players may bid for either the 10 or 15 vote cards. Each player should record which card they are bidding for (either 10 or 15) and how much they are bidding on a piece of scrap paper, and reveal their choices simultaneously. Players may only make one bid each, but do not have to bid if they do no want to. The player who bids the most for the 15 vote card receives it, and the two players who bid the most for the 10 vote cards receive one each. In the case of a tie, roll a die to see who gets the card. Any cards which were not bid for and the three 5 vote cards are arranged in a stack, with the highest value card on the top and the lowest value card on the bottom.
3. The players must now decide the order of popularity of the nominated candidates. Roll a six-sided dice for each candidate and add their charisma. The character with the highest score is the most popular candidate, the character with the second highest score the second most popular and so on. In the case of a tie, decide randomly which character is more popular.
4. Each player who bought a vote card must now allocate it to a character. Each player also receives one vote for each Cardinal they control who has *not* been nominated. The choices should be recorded on a piece of scrap paper, and revealed simultaneously. Any vote cards which were not bought should be dealt out, one per candidate, in the order of popularity. If any cards are left over once all characters have received one card, deal a second card to each character, starting with the most popular, and so on until there are no vote cards left.
5. Count up the Votes each character has received. If one character has over 50% of the total votes, they have won and are elected Pope. If not go to 6.
6. The character with the least number of votes must drop out. In the case of a tie decide randomly which character drops out. Any 'bought' vote cards allocated to a character who drops out should be re-allocated by the player who bought them, as can any votes from players' Cardinals. Any other vote cards should be distributed to the most popular remaining candidates, as in 4. Return to 5.

3. Get Thee to a Nunnery

i. The Nunnery

Players controlling female characters who are not married, and never have been, must despatch them to nunnery when they reach the age of 35. At the end of the Marriages part of the Dynastic Sequence any such characters are sent to the nunnery, and the controlling player must pay 50 crowns to the Papal Treasury.

All rules that apply to male characters in the clergy also apply to female characters in a nunnery, except that female characters may never become Bishops or Cardinals.

ii. Mother Superiors

A female character in a nunnery who is at least 40 years old may be made into a Mother Superior during the Marriages part of the Dynastic Sequence. The player controlling the character pays 20 crowns to the Papal Treasury to make the character into a Mother Superior, and can then record the fact in the Titles space on the character sheet.

In the taxation part of the Interphase, each Mother Superior receives 5 crowns (plus or minus the character's Charisma) which may be added to the controlling player's treasury.

4. Heresy!

i. Taxation

Any player may decide to keep the church's taxes for a Province they control for the Crown. The instant they do so they will be declared Heretic by the Pope (even a controlled Pope). All characters in a Dynasty belonging to the heretical player suffer a -1 modifier to their Charisma. In addition, the Pope must *fund* any non-heretical player who fights at least one round of combat with the heretical player and does not *retreat*, by paying them 5 crowns from the Papal Treasury per Army counter that took part in the combat.

As soon as a player repays to the Papal Treasury all the Church taxes they have taken, they stop being a heretic.

ii. Schism

At any time during the game, two players may jointly declare a schism and set up an anti-pope. The anti-pope may be any Cardinal character controlled by either of the players. There may only ever be one anti-pope at any one time.

As soon as a schism is declared all players must *back* either the Pope or anti-pope. A player with a Controlled Pope must back him, and the players who started the schism must back the anti-pope. All other players have a free choice. During a schism characters from a dynasty backing one side cannot marry characters from a dynasty backing the other. Players may not decide to 'change sides' during the schism.

As long as the schism lasts there are, in effect, two papacies running side by side. All the rules above still apply for the Pope and the anti-pope, with the following ammendments:

1.i Bishops. Players backing the anti-pope pay the 30 crowns to the anti-pope's treasury.

1.ii Cardinals. Players backing the anti-pope have Cardinals appointed by the anti-pope, and pay any money for so doing to the anti-pope's treasury.

2.i Papal Treasury. The anti-pope has his own Papal Treasury. The Pope and anti-pope receive Church taxes only from Provinces controlled by players who are backing them. In addition, both Popes only receive 1 crown per province instead of 2. A seperate roll should be made to find out how much money is deducted from the anti-pope's treasury.

2.ii The Pope. The Pope & anti-pope may only affect characters controlled by players who are backing them. Neither Pope may call a crusade.

2.iii The Conclave. If either Pope dies a conclave will be held, but only players backing the Pope or anti-pope who has died may take part.

3.i The Nunnery. Players backing the anti-pope pay the 50 crowns to the anti-pope's treasury.

3.ii Mother Superiors. Players backing the anti-pope pay the 20 crowns to the anti-pope's treasury.

4.i Taxation. Players who withold church taxes only receive 1 crown per province. The Pope or anti-pope will only fund attacks by players who are backing them.

The schism will not end until a Controlled Pope or anti-pope concedes defeat and declares the schism over. The treasury of the defeated pope or anti-pope is lost, and all the clergy belonging to players that backed him must renounce the clergy and become 'normal' characters. In addition, each player who backed the defeated Pope or anti-pope must pay 50 crowns to the Papal Treasury of the winning side of the schism. Play then returns to normal.

Paul Cockburn & Jervis Johnson

HEAVY METAL

Having absorbed the content of our first two articles on preparation and materials, you are now ready to begin the first exercise of ***Blanchitsu****; ie slapping on the paint!*

Ensure that you're comfortable and that you have everything needed to hand. Apply the first coats of paint, starting with the largest areas - tunic, armour, arms, legs, head, etc. At this stage make no attempt to shade, just apply the chosen colours to the model.

If you allow the brush to follow the shape of the casting, it will last longer and not show too many signs of wear. Don't worry about small areas of detail or equipment at this juncture, just concentrate on making a neat job of the major features. Once you have completed all of the basic colours put the model aside to dry.

GATT GUNSLINGER — SMOOTHBORE STEN — WALTHA TWELVE-BORE

RT03 SPACE DWARFS

COLT STONER — HECKLER SMITH — KOCH WESSON

CAPTAIN LOWBROE — INQUISITOR SLYTHE — BROTHER DIMSHADE

F3 BARBARIONS

RAOLAK — THRULL — ULUGH

BASIL WRATHBONE

C21 UNDEAD CAVALRY

LEOPOLD THE EXHUMED

C21 UNDEAD CAVALRY

CORPUS THE FALLEN

With the first stage completed and the model now absolutely dry, you may begin adding shadows to the figure. The most effective way of representing the natural darkening of shadows, clothing creases etc, is by using a colour wash. This is simply a diluted mix of a darker shade of the base colour. For example, brown rather than light brown, dark red rather than red, grey rather than white. The chart shows how you can create darker shades using Citadel Colour paint. By experimentation you will soon learn how to darken paint tones by adding different colours or shades together.

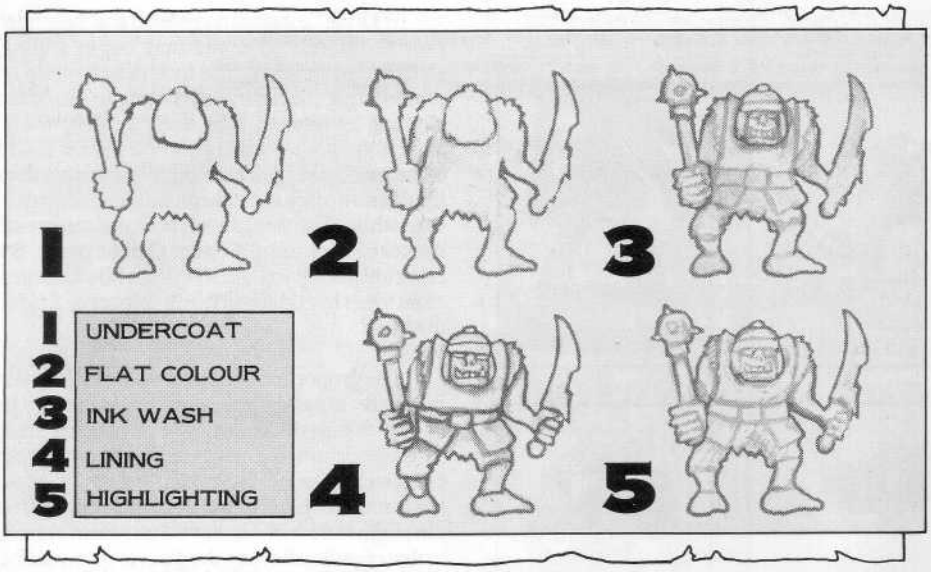
The proportion of paint to water in the wash is a matter of personal preference, required effect and the density of the particular paint being used. Trial and error will enable you to judge this most effectively. It would be foolish for us to lay down strict ratios of paint to water, so you will have to develop a feel for it! Aim for a consistency similar to that of milk, allowing the paint to flow into the crevices and creases of the figure. A wash should not be so thick that the base colour is completely masked, nor should it be so watery that it dries in distinct 'puddles'.

Many of the Citadel figures illustrated in *White Dwarf* are shaded not by a standard paint wash but using coloured ink. A mixture of ink and water is ideal for creating a wash. The pigment used for ink carries extremely well when diluted and appears to be much finer than that used in paint.

You can buy artist's inks from art shops, but these are extremely expensive and you will need a full range. The good news is that Citadel are planning a range of inks in the not too distant future (Who says no-one ever listens to us... We said, who says... Oh forget it). Watch out for further details in *White Dwarf*.

As stated above, the colour chart we've given here isn't the be-and-end-all for colour mixing. The exact shade required may vary depending upon the mood of the figure, surrounding colours and your own style. However, the chart is a good starting point. You will notice that wherever possible a darker version of the base colour is used, dark blue to shade mid-blues and crimson to shade bright red, for example. This is better than simply adding black to your original shade.

Adding black does work up to a point, but the effect of adding black is to make the tone darker, whereas what you really want is a tone that is deeper, ie you want a good strong dark blue over a mid-blue, not a dirty blue-grey. Yellow is particularly prone to discolouration if black is added, for which reason a light red-brown is to be preferred. Likewise, white will look very cold



and artificial if shaded by black/grey alone, a light biege or blue/grey are better, the latter lending an air of dignity to nobles or elves.

If you have not attempted to shade using the wash technique before, you may wish to experiment with several different densities and colour contrasts before settling on a style you prefer. Observe the way light falls upon real objects, people and clothes, notice how much darker creases and shaded areas appear. Even clothes of a single bright hue appear lighter or darker as they follow the contours of the body or fall into creases.

When trying to replicate this effect in miniature you will have to exaggerate the density and area of shadow in order to achieve what will appear as a realistic result. This is a general rule for working in miniature, colours must be overstated just as the miniature anatomy of the model is overstated by the sculptor. If you were to take a real person and shrink them down to the size of a Citadel model they would appear extremely puny and (in model terms) boring. Just as you would not look twice at an accurately scaled model no-one is going to look twice at a model which uses only very subtle shades of dull colours. Overemphasis is what you ought to try to achieve - again refer to the photographs.

Once you have finished applying washes to you model you must put it aside again and allow it to dry properly. When it is completely dry, the model is ready for the next stage, highlighting. For this you will require your cheap or older brush, as the technique of *drybrushing* quickly ruins good brushes.

To begin with, use your brush to mix a small amount of white with the base colour onto your palette. Then wipe most of the pigment from the brush. Slowly draw the bristles of the brush across the area to be highlighted, drawing against the lines of the sculpture if possible. Some of the dry pigment will brush off the bristles onto the raised areas of detail and well delineated edges. You will notice how this immediately creates a highlight. This should be repeated once again using a lighter shade and a slightly lighter brush stroke. The model should now begin to take on a 3-D effect. Continue to highlight the different base colours until this stage is complete. As with shading, exaggerated effect gives the best results.

We have occasionally heard it said that there is no need to shade or highlight models, and that the natural surrounding light provides its own shadows and highlights. *This is simply nonsense!* The depressions and raised portions of a miniature probably show a marked difference of no more than 3mm, and are mostly in the order of 1mm or less. In real life this figure is more a matter of several inches. The way that light falls upon the miniature and the real life object is totally different, even the restricted light from a window diffuses around a small model in a way it cannot do in the case of a large object.

If your subject includes armour, either in the form of plates of metal or mail-type armour, the basic techniques of wash and drybrush will give a good result. For plate armour a base of silver can be washed with black. When mixing a wash to shade armour, add a little more water than you normally would to allow the metallic base colour to shine through. Drybrush with silver. The highlights on metal should be clearer and cleaner than on cloth. Experiment until you get an effect you like.

If you want to simulate rust, weathering or battle damage, wait until the highlighting is completely dry and apply a wash of orange or brown. This technique can also be used generally over the whole figure to give it a weather-beaten appearance, but be careful not to overdo it! A a rule, metallic colours should be left to dry for slightly longer than normal pigments. If you apply a wash over a metallic shade before it is properly dry it will run horribly. Avoid too much brushwork when shading, or you will scrub away the base coat.

It is now time to attend to any areas not yet painted. This will include detail such as belts, helmets, hair, feet, pouches, plumes, trappings, weapons, etc. The same techniques are used as for the larger areas, but you will have to be even more careful. Not only are the areas smaller and more fiddly, but you must avoid spoiling work already completed. Be especially careful not to splash surrounding areas with your washes. This stage can be awkward, especially if the model features a lot of detail which is difficult to get at. Once you have painted a few models you will be able to identify those areas which are more convenient to paint initially and those which are better left until last.

When the whole model has been painted, shaded and highlighted, the next stage is *outlining*. To do this you will need to use your finest brush, bringing it to a good point and taking only a little paint upon its tip. Outline all of the areas where one part of the model joins another, such as the joint between sleeve and hand, where the tunic joins the breeches, the edge of belts, where the helmet or hair meets the face, etc.

This method is used by historical wargamers to paint whole armies, usually employing black to outline the crisp colours of military uniforms. When dealing with armies this looks extremely good, but for individual models a less stark effect works better.

COLOUR REQUIRED	BASE COLOUR	COLOURS TO WASH WITH	COLOUR(S) TO DRY-BRUSH WITH
Dark Green	Woodland Green	Woodland Green + Moody Blue	Bilious Green
Drab Green	Goblin Green	Woodland Green + Swamp Brown	Goblin Green + Skull White or Sunburst Yellow
Flesh	Bronzed Flesh	Swamp Brown	Bronzed Flesh + Skull White
Dark Blue	Moody Blue	Moody Blue + Black	Enchanted Blue
Mid Blue	Electric Blue	Enchanted Blue	Electric Blue + Skull White
Bronze	Brazen Bronze	Brazen Bronze + Swamp Brown	Shining Gold
Iron	Chainmail	Chaos Black + Moody Blue	Mityril Silver
Tan	Hobgoblin Orange	Swamp Brown	Hobgoblin Orange + Sunburst Yellow
Rich Brown	Swamp Brown	Swamp Brown + Chaos Black	Swamp Brown + Hobgoblin Orange
Dull Brown	Bestial Brown	Bestial Brown + Chaos Black	Bestial Brown + Skull White

For general outlining, dark grey or dark brown are the most effective, depending upon the colour of areas being outlined. If an area is especially dark, or if the contrast is especially sharp, such as cloth and metal, black may be used. Mix the required colour with water until you get a consistency that flows easily but still gives a good opaque line.

Often it is sufficient to merely dip the tip of the brush in water to freshen up the paint without spoiling the tip, this counteracts the rapid evaporation of water and the fast drying-time of the paint itself. Outlining requires a steady hand and a degree of patience... OK, a Degree *in* Patience. See the photo for a demonstration of the famous John Blanche 'elbows locked to desk, wrists locked together, holding breath technique'.

With the outlining complete you may wish to pause for breath before adding the *fun bits* such as runes, rips, cuts, buttons, badges, patterning and so on. The technique used is essentially that for outlining, although carrying the colours as required. You may wish to go back and outline these elements again once they are dry, using a suitable shade to do so.

The face is often said to be the focal point of the carefully presented model. Painting a face is not especially difficult so long as you are prepared to invest a bit of time in getting it right. This is the John Blanche face painting method. Everyone has their own style, their own approach, and their own ideal - so be prepared to adapt these ideas to your own needs.

Just as shading and highlighting were deliberately exaggerated to give the figure depth, so faces are also exaggerated. It is true, the typical Blanche vizage leans towards the darker side of life but, in our judgement the method works, producing attractive and evocative faces.

The face should receive its base coat, wash and highlights during the normal painting routine.

In addition, extra highlighting is applied to the nose, and a black wash is applied into the eye sockets. Lips are added in the desired colour, normally a mix of red/yellow/white for human coloured creatures. A dark red-brown line will separate the lips, or dark crimson in the case of open mouths. Tusks and teeth are spotted in carefully. If you accidentally get white paint onto the lips you can easily paint over the mistake.

Eyes are spotted in with white, carefully following the moulding. When dry a small dot is added for the pupil. The top of the eye is then outlined using black, somewhat like a line of black mascara. If you allow this line to drop slightly onto the eye itself you will create the impression of an eye-lid, preventing the eye from staring.

There are other ways to paint faces, but we shall return to these in a future article. Advanced techniques of *Blanchitsu* may be dangerous in the hands of those who are not yet truly learned in the control of their powers!

When the face is complete your model is all but finished. All that you will need to do now is decorate and paint the base. Again, this is a diverse subject and one which we shall return to in a future article. Fortunately, one of the most simple methods is also one of the most effective, and is often used for models shown in *White Dwarf*.

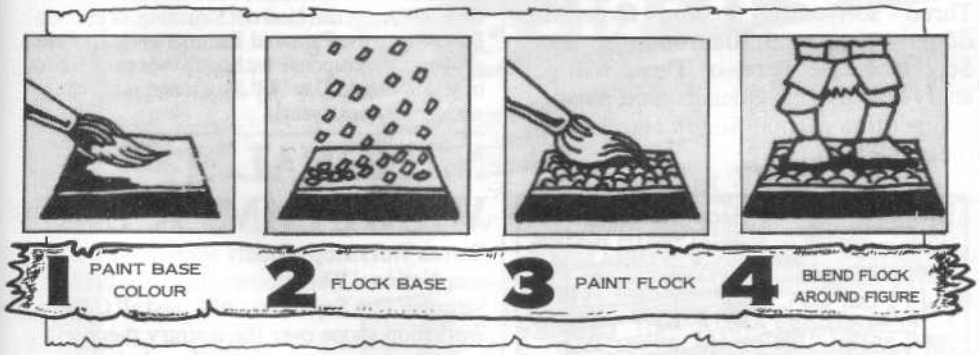
You will need PVA (woodworking) glue and a very old brush or even cocktail stick. Paint a layer of glue onto the top of the model's base, being careful to avoid the feet. Then sprinkle ordinary sand onto the glue and allow it to dry. This surface can be painted green to represent grass, or brown/grey to represent bare earth. Dry-brush with a suitable lighter shade to complete the base. It may be advantageous to outline the model's feet, or to apply a dark wash around the figure's feet to lift it out of the basing material.

We said all that you needed to do was the base? Well, yes, the figure is now complete, but if you want to preserve your careful paint job you **must** apply varnish. The most convenient type of varnish comes in spray cans, and is applied in the same way as a white undercoat. Art shops sell suitable varnish in both matt and gloss forms, whilst garages sell gloss varnish alongside their range of car paints.

The *Blanchitsu* school of thought, however, scorns such devices in favour of a huge tin of household polyeurathane varnish and a brush. By applying several coats, a touch-protective layer is built up and the figure takes on the sheen of fine porcelain. With all this varnish, John Blanche models tend to acquire a yellow tint after a while, but this is quite pleasing in itself.

The application of varnish is, admittedly, a question of personal preference, and you may prefer the flat effect of matt varnish, or a somewhat thinner layer of gloss varnish. In any case, matt varnish is not as good a protective coat as gloss. If you prefer a flat finish it is best to apply a thin coat of gloss and then a thin layer of matt. Armour, weapons and bare metal should look glossy in any case, a small tin of gloss varnish and a brush can be used to selectively 'gloss-up' any detail you may choose.

John Blanche and Rick Priestley



COLOUR REQUIRED	BASE COLOUR	COLOURS TO WASH WITH	COLOUR(S) TO DRY-BRUSH WITH
Bright Red	Red Gore	Imperial Purple-Blood Red Mix	Red-Gore-Sunburst Yellor or White Mix
Crimson	Blood Red	Imperial Purple	Red Gore
Orange	Hobgoblin Orange	Blood Red or Swamp Brown	Hobgoblin Orange Sunburst Yellow Mix
Golden Yellow	Sunburst Yellow	Sunburst Yellow Hobgoblin Orange Mix	Sunburst Yellow
Yellow	Sunburst Yellow	Sunburst Yellow + Slight Touch of Swamp Brown	Sunburst Yellow + White
White	Skull White	Skull White + Elf Grey or Bronzed Flesh	Skull White
Grey	Elf Grey	Ghoul Grey	Skull White
Black	Chaos Black		Skull Black + Woodland Green or Enchanted Blue or Ghoul Grey
Purple	Imperial Purple	Imperial Purple + Moody Blue	Imperial Purple + Skull White
Bright Green	Bilious Green	Woodland Green	Bilious Green + Skull White

LONE TROOPER

Solitaire rules for the Rogue Trooper boardgame

By Richard Halliwell

The *Rogue Trooper* story makes for an ideal solitaire game. Indeed, a solo version is closer to the comic strip in *2000AD* than the multi-player version used for the conventional game.

So, how do you play *Rogue Trooper* on your own? The answer is quite simple really. In fact *Solo Rogue Trooper* works so well you might even suspect that it was intended to be the game all along...

Summary of Play

The lone GI follows the normal sequence of drawing Mission cards, travelling to the specified location and, on completion of the Mission, drawing a clue card. When you have a full set of Clue Cards the Traitor's counter should be placed on Millicom, then you pursue him across Nu-Earth until you or the traitor is killed or the time limit expires. You win if the Traitor is killed before the end of the game, otherwise you lose.

Card Decks

Rogue Cards

Go through the Rogue Cards and take out all those showing the traitor. There are two types of cards: ones which merely move the traitor around; and ones which in some way effect combat between him and the Trooper. There are nine such cards. Shuffle them and place them face down on the top right hand corner of the board, and put the traitor token next to them. These cards are the *Traitor Deck* in the solo game.

Now go through the remaining Rogue Cards and take out all those headed *End*, except for the Sister Sledge card which should stay in the main Rogue card deck. The cards you have removed those which affect the outcome of the player's Missions. Shuffle these cards and place them face down on the terrain key square. These cards form the *Endphase Deck*.

The remaining Rogue cards should be shuffled and placed face-down to the left of the board. These cards are (surprise, surprise) called the *Rogue Deck*.

Mission Cards

Go through the Mission Card deck, remove the Genie Missions and put them somewhere out of harm's way. Shuffle the deck and place it face down next to the *Endphase Deck*.

Encounter Cards

Sort through the encounter cards and take out the two female GIs - Azure and Venus Bluegenes. Place these two cards, face up, at the top left hand corner of the board. Shuffle the rest of the cards and put the deck face down in front of you.

Supply and Clue cards

These cards are used in exactly the same way as in the multi-player game.

Preparing for Play

Use the sequence described in section 4 of the rule book in every detail but do not deal yourself a hand of Rogue Cards.

Turn Sequence

The turn is not the same as that used in the basic game. Instead you should use the following turn sequence:

Rogue Phase

Turn over the top card on the *Rogue Deck*. The cards in the Rogue deck fall into two fairly obvious categories *advantageous* and *disadvantageous*. Advantageous cards are those which are good for the player, for example those that allow extra movement, bonuses on evade rolls or escape from prison. Disadvantageous cards are the opposite - eg they prevent movement.

If the card is a advantageous one you may take it and place it face-up in front of you. In this way you will acquire a hand of *Rogue Cards* like the GIs in the multi-player game. This hand is subject to all the normal rules - the cards may be played in their appropriate phases, you may never hold more than three of them, etc. If you draw an advantageous card and you already hold three *Rogue Cards* you must *immediately* discard one of them. The surplus card cannot be played in the turn's move phase.

If the card is disadvantageous, its effects automatically influence the rest of the your turn. For example if you turned over a mantrap card then the counter cannot be moved. You can't play a Rogue movement card from his own hand to negate it's effects.

You must keep turning over a *Rogue Card* each turn you are on Millicom, even when these won't have any effect on play. This is because the *Rogue Deck* sets the time limit for the game - see below.

Move Phase

If the card turned over in the Rogue phase wasn't a disadvantageous movement *Rogue Card* you may now lay an advantageous movement Rogue card and move the counter. All the normal movement rules apply.

Encounter Phase

If the card turned over in the Rogue phase wasn't a disadvantageous encounter Rogue card you may now lay an advantageous encounter Rogue card. The normal encounter sequence is used, except of course that you must sort multiple encounters by their initiative ratings themselves. All the normal encounter and combat rules apply.

End Phase

If the you have reached a mission destination you may attempt to complete the mission. You simply draws the topmost card from the *Endphase Deck*. If the card corresponds to the mission then it affects the mission's outcome in the way described. If it doesn't the card is simply ignored.

Winning the Game

Time Limit

Solo Rogue Trooper is played against a strictly limited number of turns. The game is timed by the *Rogue Deck*. You must turn over one card from the *Rogue Deck* each turn. If there are no more Rogue cards left, the game has ended and you have lost.

The Traitor

Once the you have acquired a full set of clue cards the Traitor's counter should be placed on the bridge at Millicom. Play progresses exactly as in the multi-player game, but after each round of combat with the Traitor you should turn over the topmost card from the *Traitor Deck*. If the card is completely inappropriate - for example a *Traitor at the Magnopole* card when the traitor is still on the bridge - ignore it. Otherwise implement its affects immediately.

Special Cases

Wedding Bell Missions

When GI's draw *Wedding Bells* missions they must accept the mission. Take the appropriate 'Doll' from the top-left hand corner of the board, and roll a D6. Consult the following table and place the card on the Sector indicated.

Score	*Sector*
1	Nu-Arcady
2	Glasshouse
3	Nort Command Post
4	Swamp Base
5	Furlow
6	Bridge on Millicom

To complete the mission you must encounter the Doll as normal and then take her on board as an ordinary companion. Once a GI has completed one Wedding Bells Mission, a subsequent one should be ignored ('coz that would be bigamy).

K for Ken

Normally the only way to get rid of K for Ken is to offload him on some other GI. In the solo game this is impossible so you can lose him automatically by playing a card which involves an atmocraft craft or shuttle journey.

Sister Sledge

The Sister Sledge Rogue card is in the solo game *Rogue Deck*. Should it be turned over when you are accompanied by Sister Sledge implement its effects immediately - don't wait until the end phase.

Mantraps

A *Mantrap* Rogue Card prevents you playing both Movement and Encounter Rogue cards. It also stops you doing anything in the Endphase.

Dead Players

When a lone GI dies there are no other players around to retrieve his Bio-chips. If this happens assume the Souther command retrieve the chip:

You lose any ammunition, companions and special item cards.

Roll 2 dice and turn over that number of cards from the top of the *Rogue Deck* to represent the amount of time elapsed.

You lose any other bio-chips you might have had in your possession. New chips may be acquired only by chance meeting with a *Dying GI* Encounter card.

You resume play on the bridge at Millicom and may automatically draw two dice rolls of supplies.

Richard Halliwell

All The Lonely People

Campaign Characters for the Judge Dredd Roleplaying Game

by Marcus Rowland

There are more than four hundred million citizens in Mega-City One. Judges always tend to see them in a rather cynical light, but should remember that a few aren't perps or futsies. Of course, some of them are just plain odd...

Mega-City One is notorious for the strangeness of its population, and it's the eccentrics that most people will remember, An ordinary citizen just merges with the crowd; the true oddball stands out, and adds essential flavour to life in the Mega-City.

Consider Judge Dredd's relationship with Otto Sump. Although he denies it, Dredd probably regards Otto as something of a protégé. Otto's strange combination of appalling ugliness, stupidity, misguided business acumen and chutzpah has given the Justice Department many problems, but Otto has never served a day in the cubes. Most other citizens would be jailed for wasting Justice Department time if nothing else! Dredd seems to tolerate Sump for his entertainment value. Life's never dull when he's hatching one of his peculiar business schemes.

Recurrent characters like Otto add a lot of flavour to the Judge Dredd stories, but tend to be omitted from scenarios because they don't easily fit into a short term adventure. Ideally, they should be introduced into a campaign as part of a regular cast of characters who are seldom important but often become involved in the plot. Otto is one good example, but others include Max Normal, Edwin Parsey and Walter the Wobot. Although Normal falls into a readily defined role as a nark, he's an individual rather than a cardboard cutout. Parsey isn't just a spont, he's *the* definitive spont. As for Walter, any robot with that sort of taste in underwear has got to be noteworthy...

Here, for the delectation of your players, is a tasteful selection of citizens, primed and ready to interact with any Judges lucky enough to cross their paths. Don't just use them once and forget them. Mega-City One is big, but a Judge assigned to a regular patrol route will probably run into the same citizens every now and again.

Use these characters to lead your players into adventures, pass on information, or simply entertain them. All of them should have a miraculous knack of avoiding really serious trouble. If the Judges do eventually decide to send them to the cubes, arrange for a fortuitous amnesty or change in the law to get them out and back into your campaign. Your players will thank you for it...

These characters are intended as examples. If possible, change names and vary as many details as possible, since your players may very well see this article.

Oliver Thrung (Businessman)

Oliver owns Thrung Inc, a large firm of locksmiths and builders. The company specialises in repairing the damage left after Justice Department blitz raids. As the blitz team depart, Thrung's workmen arrive to repair doors, replace floors and make apartments habitable again. If all the occupants have been arrested, the bill goes to the landlord.

How do Thrung's workmen reach the scene so quickly? Encourage the players to suspect that he has bribed a Judge, or listens to their messages illegally. If they blitz his office or apartment, they'll find evidence of nothing worse than a few minor offences, worth a month or two in the cubes. While he's inside, the team will notice that the repair teams are always hours late. In fact Thrung has a low grade precog ability. He simply has hunches about the location of the next raid and sends out work crews accordingly. Unfortunately, this power won't function for any more useful activity.

Although Thrung is honest, some of his workmen might not be. Possibilities include pilfering, cutting duplicate electro-keys for later robberies, and industrial espionage.

Sometimes workmen arrive on the scene a few minutes before the blitz team. Sooner or later they'll walk into a hostage situation or get in the way of the Judges.

Thrung is rich enough to afford some very good lawyers who may be able to find technicalities to get him out of the cubes after serving only a fraction of any normal sentence.

Oliver Thrung

S **2**	I **16**	CS **12**	DS **20**	TS **18**	SS **32**	MS **8**	PS **49**

Special Ability: Precognition (has hunches)

Oliver is 43, well groomed but slightly old fashioned. He lives in a luxury con-apt in the richest part of the sector.

Crazy Glad (Mrs Gladys Roach, Street Person)

Glad is one of the many victims of the Apocalypse War. Formerly married to a wealthy banker, she took to the streets to flee the Sov invasion, but returned to find that she was a homeless widow. The double blow was shattering. She wandered away from the sector refugee hostel, and began to live rough in the wreckage of her old block. As reconstruction began she moved on, preferring to haunt the ruins of the seediest parts of town.

Over the years she has become an incredibly shrewd observer of the street scene and often acts as a nark to the Judges of whichever area she inhabits. In turn, the Judges tend to ignore her begging. Ironically, Glad is still extremely wealthy and could easily afford to return to her affluent lifestyle. However, she never touches her money and won't carry credit cards or any identification, apart from her standard citizen's ID.

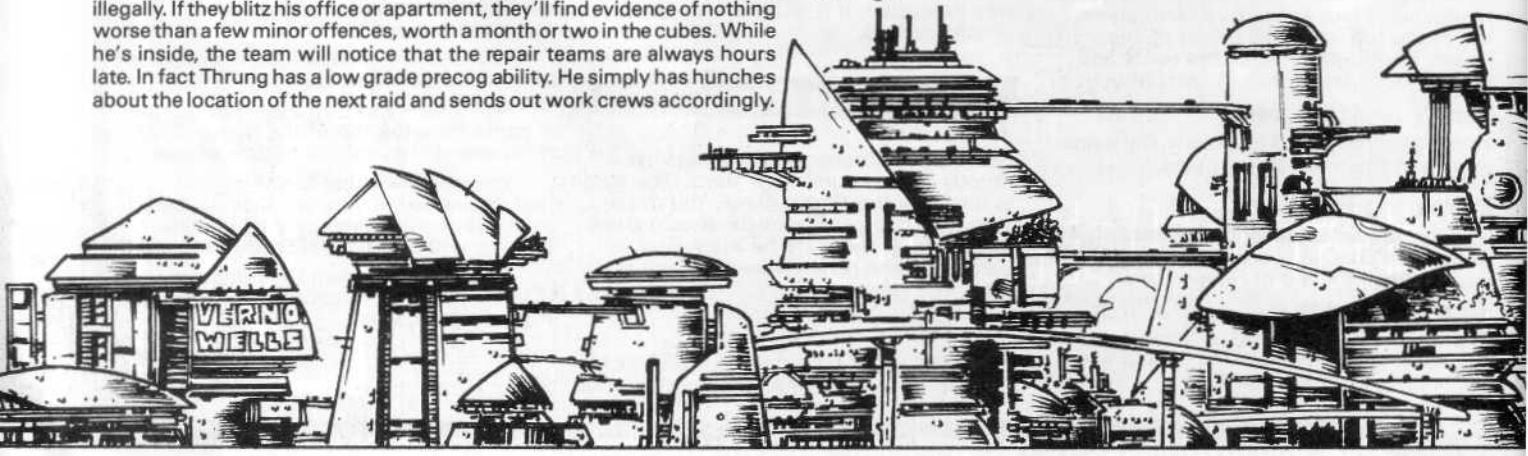
Glad is best used as an occasional informant. A more experienced Judge should introduce her to the team. Alternatively, she could be the long lost mother of one of the Judges. Let them encounter her a few times and learn her story, then don't mention her for a while. At a convenient moment reveal that she has dropped out of sight completely and encourage the Judges to start worrying about her safety. Perhaps she's been kidnapped as part of a plan to steal her money, or possibly she's simply decided to return to her former life, and now dwells in a luxury penthouse. Or maybe she's just gone on to another sector. She uses her card so rarely that it could take weeks to track her down.

Gladys Roach

S **1**	I **22**	CS **12**	DS **9**	TS **11**	SS **73**	MS **7**	PS **40**

Special Abilities: Sense Soft Touch (SS ability), Inconspicuous (SS ability), Sense Perps, Detect Intent (erratic)

Sense Soft Touch is a trivial SS ability allowing the user to sense whether or not it's worth approaching a potential benefactor. *Inconspicuous* simply adds 10% to SS when attempting to hide. Neither ability is avilable to Judges.



Gladys is 50 but looks older, and dresses in appalling, old, cast-off clothing. She always carries two or three bags of belongings. She is always on the borderline of a public health violation.

'Honest' Abdul Akbar (Rug Salesman)

Akbar is that rarity, a totally honest citizen. He's a door to door salesman specialising in carpets and soft furnishings, covering a dozen blocks around his home. Unfortunately, Akbar has a habit of getting into trouble: he's been tapped dozens of times, walked into six separate confronts between rival juve gangs, was hit by a ricochet during the last block war and has his pockets picked three or four times a week.

Justice Department crime analysts have noticed these incidents and concluded that Akbar is crime-prone, in the same way that some people are accident-prone. Although his behaviour is impeccable, something about him seems to attract perps. For this reason, Akbar is under permanent Justice Department surveillance. He's followed by Spy In The Sky cameras whenever he leaves his apartment and the perps who follow him are soon apprehended.

There are many ways the Judges can encounter Akbar; perhaps the most amusing is if they don't know about him and are then reprimanded for scaring the perps away. In the course of time his bruised features, torn clothing, and perpetual 'Why me?' expression will become familiar landmarks in the routine life of your sector.

'Honest' Akbar (Abdul Akbar, salesman)

S **2**	I **21**	CS **15**	DS **14**	TS **18**	SS **45**	MS **8**	PS **10**

Special Abilities: Salesmanship (SS Ability)

On a roll against SS the vendor overcomes the resistance of any customer who fails an SS roll. Judges are almost immune; give them 25% bonus. Akbar won't try to use this ability on Judges anyway.

Akbar is 32. He is handsome and would like to be a snappy dresser but always seems to lose his best clothing to tapsters and other perps.

'Greasy' Joe Kablonski (Fast Food Chef)

Joe runs the Acme Diner, a typical fast food joint on the nastier side of the sector. He's been robbed hundreds of times and now runs a credit only business, so there's never any cash in the shop. All this means, however, is that the perps tend to steal food, furnishings and fittings instead.

The odd thing is that the perps never hurt Joe; he's just held at gunpoint or locked in the storeroom. Typically, the Judges will encounter him as he philosophically sweeps up the broken glass left by his last visitors, and return a few hours later to find that he's been robbed again while they were rounding up the last group of perps. He always offers them Synthi-Synthi-Caff and it happens that he makes the best 'caff in the sector, in unusually large mugs. An hour or two after any Judge drinks one, he faces the awkward problem of using a public lavatory while wearing a skintight synthi-leather suit...

Joe is a fairly passive character. He rarely does much, but his situation means that the Judges will see quite a lot of him. He has an irritating habit of whistling hymns while he works and is always cheerful, despite the robberies. If questioned, he'll explain that he's a born-again Omphalologist (a religion so obscure that he's the only member in the sector), and doesn't want to accumulate bad cosmic forces by worrying about his problems. The diner is always sparkling clean (except when it's littered with broken glass). The food is dreadful (normal Mega-City One diner standard), though as wholesome as any other totally synthetic meal.

Turn Joe into a familiar character, then kill him in some particularly gruesome way, to lead the player characters into an adventure. The quarry of a hunt club? The first victim of a new and peculiarly vile disease? The list of possibilities is endless.

'Greasy' Joe Kablonski

S **2**	I **15**	CS **14**	DS **10**	TS **15**	SS **25**	MS **31**	PS **17**

Joe is 45 and always wears a white apron over his clothing.

Harriet Lark

Harriet is a con-woman. However, she's shrewd enough to find rackets that are technically legal, until the Judges change the Law to stop her. Her only convictions are for minor charges brought by Judges who wanted her out of the way for a few months. She's always prepared to shut down her operations at the first hint of Justice Department opposition. Harriet is a great admirer of Otto Sump, and her greatest regret is that she didn't invent Smart Sweets first. Until the Law was changed, she ran one of the largest 'Billing Service' rackets in the city. She sent out bills for a few hundred credits plus tax, in which the debt was a fee for writing the bill!

Recently, Harriet founded Immortality Inc, a company offering the secret of immortality for twenty credits plus tax. If read carefully, the advertisement only offers the following:

* A book slug containing the secret (with no guarantee that it is usable)
* An 'I Know The Secret Of Immortality' tee-shirt
* A music slug (the 20th-century classic 'Staying Alive')

The book slug contains the equivalent of four hundred computer-generated pages, paraphrasing the sentence, 'The way to achieve immortality is to live forever' several thousand times. Immortality Inc has been chartered as a tee-shirt company, and careful reading of the small print in the advertisement reveals that the company only charges for the shirts - the slugs are free gifts! So far Harriet has sold more than a hundred thousand packages, making five creds per pack before tax.

Harriet knows that the Judges will arrest her on the slightest excuse, and runs a very clean operation. The books are impeccable, all permits and taxes are in order, and her advertising is just barely legal. Her apartment is clean and she doesn't indulge in any illegal vices.

The team will probably find a way to shut down the operation, and put Harriet away for a few months but she'll always have another operation planned and will bob up again and again, always with larger, more lucrative and more or less legal rackets.

Harriet Lark

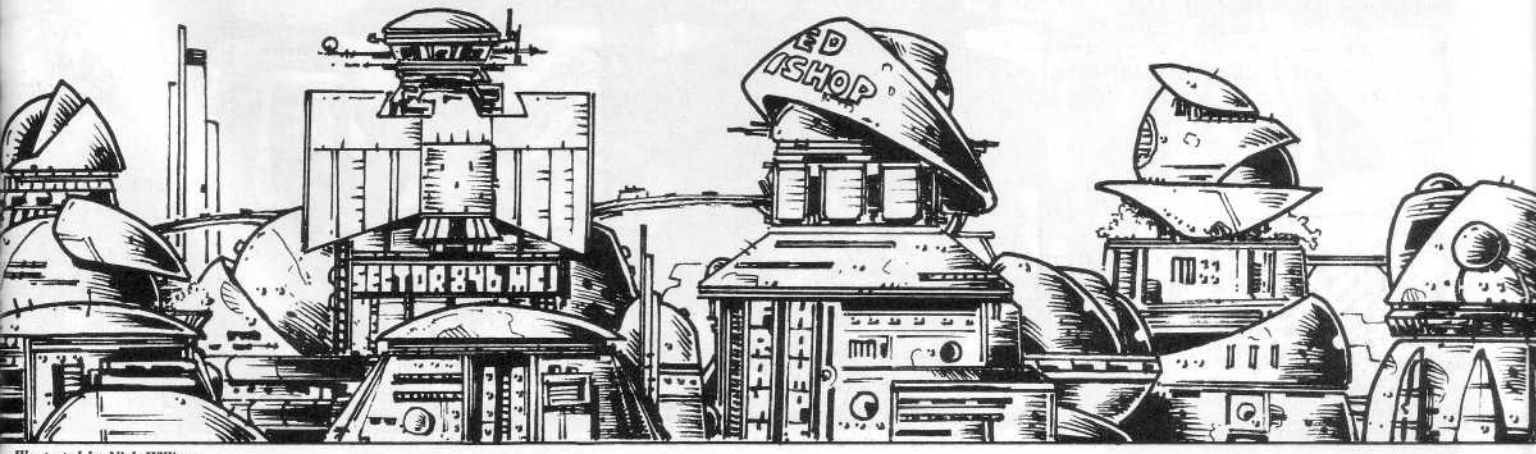
S **3**	I **35**	CS **21**	DS **16**	TS **57**	SS **43**	MS **12**	PS **6**

Special Abilities: Use Data (2), Law.

Law is a civilian SS Ability which gives a deep knowledge of The Law, giving a 10% bonus on SS in attempts to prove that an action is legal. All Judges know The Law in this much detail without needing special SS rolls.

Harriet is 37, a snappy dresser who follows the Pinstripe Freak fad. The only way to annoy her is to insult her clothing, umbrella or shoes.

Marcus Rowland



Illustrated by Nick Williams

Illuminations

Stephen Tappin first came to my attention almost a year ago with his adaptable style and appropriately Citadel-esque draughtsmanship. Born in Exeter in 1966, he is now studying for an honours degree in Graphic Design at the Canterbury College of Art and fills up those long weekends by drawing illustrations for *White Dwarf*.

Alan Lee and *Faeries* collaborator Brian Froud are two of Stephen's favourite artists, though his tastes span the ages and he holds the pre-Raphaelites and some of the Newlyn artists in great admiration. Stephen claims that given the time and the resources, he would love to recapture their esoteric style.

Atmosphere is all important to Stephen and whether he finds it in a late Waterhouse canvas or the imagery of a Ridley Scott film, the impression stays with him. Influences go beyond the visual media of art and film and include history and legends, the dulcet tones of Kate Bush, And Tolkien, naturally...

Stephen is working at the Games Workshop Design Studio during the summer months. As a result, his work will feature in several of the current Games Workshop projects, in particular **Warhammer 40,000**. As his technique and style mature, I'm sure Stephen will be a major force in future. Keep your eyes open for his illustrations in Games Workshop products.

John Blanche

SISTER
SIN

Sound Familiar?

Illustrated by Paul Bonner

Pets and... something more... for magicians and spell weavers

By Alison Brooks & David Flin

In high fantasy and other varieties of the sword-and-sorcery genre, magicians typically have some sort of familiar - the spirit of either an animal or a more esoteric creature in material form. In traditional belief the familiar is a demon and the source of the magician's power. In fantasy literature, the familiar is commonly no more than the magician's pet. *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*, for example, seems to lie somewhere between the two, with the mage gaining the hit points and perceptions of the familiar. It therefore appears that, in some sense, the mage is sharing the life force of the familiar. It is possible that the reverse is also true, and that the familiar shares the life force of the mage.

Whatever the game system powerful familiar spirits, imps and so forth, are usually dealt with in much greater detail than ordinary beasts. The possibilities of mundane familiars are overlooked. They are considered boring, and it is not unknown for mages to go through several familiars in search of a powerful one. Needless to say, this is against the nature, and often the letter, of any rules system. Instead of heavy-handed GM action to prevent such abuses, it is worth examining in detail the 'boring', ordinary familiars to see whether they are as interesting as the specials.

When you consider ordinary familiars, you tend to think of them in terms of their abilities as understood by modern science. How much light does a black cat need before it can see properly? What is a crow's airspeed in knots? ...And so on. Rules can encourage this, giving familiars pretty much the abilities we would expect, with the exception of abnormal intelligence.

In medieval times however, and in places where the charge of witchcraft was regarded as no more or less than the truth, opinions were often different from our own. In deference to these scholars of a bygone era, what follows is a little of what was believed to be true of those creatures which were traditionally familiars. Much of it could be echoed in the character attitudes in a roleplaying game...

the Black cat

The best known feature of the cat is its stealth and its silent stalking. In Norse mythology, one of the six impossible things which went into the making of the chain to bind Fenris, the wolf whose release marks the end of the world, was the sound of a cat's footfall. It seems possible that this stealth would be transferred to the mage possessing a cat familiar.

The cat has extraordinary powers of seeing in the dark. The glare of a cat is so acute that its eye penetrates the darkness with a gleam of light. This is how cats see in the dark. Usually, this beam of light must be sufficiently dim that something with the visual ability of, say, a human would be unable to spot it. Only around the campfire is there sufficient light to see the cat's eyes glowing, illuminating its path. On the other hand, there will be no darkness, except the magical kind, in which the cat will not be able to see.

Then there is the well known belief that cats have nine lives. Some say this involves eight reincarnations, others that it is merely eight miraculous escapes from death. The cat is the only one who knows for certain, which gives it a certain - almost justifiable - smugness. Whatever the truth, it is clear that no self-respecting mage with a cat familiar would fail to take account of its nine lives. After all, if the cat provided these powers to the magician, he would have gained access to a remarkable power. Even if this power was not transferred, the magician would be aware of its existence, and could be on the way to discovering the secret.

Another mystical property of the cat was its spittle! The theory went as follows: because of its rough tongue, when a cat licked the skin of a person, it would wear away the upper layers so that after a time, its spittle would come into proximity with the blood supply of its victim. The effect of this was to either drive the victim into rage and madness, or make them tame and gentle. While this may not seem to have much relevance to the mage it does imply that cat spittle is magical. However, what foe would stand still long enough to be licked into madness by a cat?

The spittle might therefore be used as a poison to engender madness or calm. It might also be efficacious in spells of a fear- (or calm-) inducing variety. It might act as a bonus to such spells, or be a material component for them.

Traditionally, it was lucky to have a black cat cross your path. The recipient gained the proverbial 'luck of the devil.' When this is considered in addition to the cat's other attributes (stealth, an association with darkness, and cruelty to prey), its possible that a mage with a black cat familiar might be neutral at best, and evil at worst. Whatever good intentions were present to start with, the magic user now has other reasons to opt for a feline familiar.∴ and perhaps to resist giving it up...

the crow

The medieval crow was believed to have a number of abilities that would make it an attractive familiar. It was thought to have acted as a pathfinder to migrating storks, leading them safely from Europe to Asia. This seems to indicate that the crow excelled at finding safe routes: very useful, to say the least, for a travelling magician.

The crow troubled men with omens and predictions of the future. These predictions were especially concerned with the bringing of tidings of bad weather. Perhaps this perceived ability to see into the future is the reason why the crow was considered such a skilled pathfinder. Whatever the truth, the crow never seemed to swerve from its duty of bringing news, usually bad. Because of its foreknowledge, it is likely that the presence of a crow would be useful in casting spells of an informational nature.

The crow was also believed to reveal the paths of treachery, an ability of obvious value to the mage. It may not be a particularly comfortable familiar, but for those who can stand its personality, a crow's peculiar abilities will provide adequate recompense.

Crows were also considered garrulous, so much so that a secretive mage would do well to be wary of his 'own' crow. According to the Bestiarist, God does not entrust His secrets to the crow - and God is supposed to be a good judge.

the screech owl

The most noticeable feature of the owl is that it is nocturnal. There is a simple reason for this: it is blinded by the sun, and cannot see during the day. This would be a considerable disadvantage to the travelling magician.

Less well-known habits of the owl included its supposed nocturnal visits to goats and sheep, where it would suck milk from their udders. This, incidentally, would cause the beasts to become blind and unable to give further milk. Satisfied with its work, the owl then flew off.

In our magical world, this seems to indicate that the owl is drawing off that part of their life force which allows the sheep and goats to see. It is this which enables the owl to see by night. That there is magic involved seems unquestionable, only its nature is debatable. Milk taken by this method may be a, perhaps *the*, major ingredient of potions of infravision, clairvoyance and the like. It may help against blindness (natural and magical) and in creating spells of darkness. The mage with an owl will have to be prepared to compensate the local shepherds!

Owls were also believed to be capable of listening patiently and learning. There is a tale of an owl who, although blind during the daytime, would fly down and listen to the orators at the public forum. It quickly became as learned as the orators. Clearly, for our purposes, the owl not only comprehends human speech, it also has discernment, and can evaluate whether the information will be of interest or not.

Thus the owl would be of value to the mage seeking information, be it of magical learning, or of more mundane secrets. An owl would make an excellent spy.

the hawk

The hawk has long been associated with the nobility through the sport of hawking and falconry. Not suprisingly, then, the was perceived hawk to display many 'noble' attributes. It is a very spartan, strong willed bird, and shows great courage. Its name derives from its seizing upon others - its aggressive hunting instincts. It seems very much a creature for whom might makes right, and for whom power excuses all.

In accordance with its attitudes, the hawk was believed to be abnormally severe towards its offspring. It exposes its young to the full light of the sun at an early age. If the chick has a fearless gaze, and stares uninjured at the sun, it is considered worthy. A chick which flinches, and turns its eyes from the sun is considered unworthy, and is thrown from the nest. As an aside, it should be noted that this ability to stare unblinking at the sun has been observed by falconers throughout the ages. Once the young are old enough to fly, the parents cease to feed them, and beat them with their wings to drive them from the nest, thus forcing them to fend for themselves.

In short, the hawk will do all in its power to ensure that its chicks do not turn into sluggish adults, and it may be that it will not tolerate sluggishness in its magician. Thus, the hawk familiar will be most suitable for magicians of noble, militaristic and spartan inclinations. A comfort-loving weakling may have difficulties with a hawk familiar.

the toad

According to legend, some toads are venomous, and no toad fears or suffers from any form of poison. The applications of this to the interested magician are self-evident.

There was believed to be a gemstone in the head of the toad. This stone had to be cut out while the creature lived, or else it was worthless. The magician with a toad familiar needs to be aware of those greedy enough to desire the gem.

In the right side of the toad, scholars thought, there was a bone which, when cast into a pot of boiling water, would instantly cause it to stop boiling. While the bone remained there the water would never boil. There was also thought to be a bone in the left side of the toad which, if cast into water that had ceased boiling, would instantly cause the water to boil once more.

Furthermore, the left bone could cause lust and anger and hot bloodedness, whilst the right side bone would cool these same feelings. Control of these feelings was attributed to the toad; the mage with a toad familiar would find it easier to cast spells to incite or quench such hot-blooded emotions.

As if this were not enough for the humble toad, Pliny reports that various parts of the toad could be used in magical remedies. Parts could also be used to make a person answer truthfully. Thus the toad may be of great value to the mage, but it could also be a great liability with other magicians seeking its useful components for their spells.

The natural habitat of toads is in bramble bushes. But then, you all knew that...

the weasel

The weasel was known to be aggressive, without fear and incredibly cunning. It would pursue snakes, slaying and eating them from head to tail. In addition it was thought that basilisks were conquered by weasels: the basilisk would flee when it saw the weasel, and could be pursued and killed.

As if this is not enough in the way of combat expertise, the aquatic weasel, the otter, was supposed to slay crocodiles! When the crocodile fell asleep, the otter would roll itself in mud, and slip into the throat of the crocodile. The crocodile, on suddenly waking up, would gulp the otter down. The otter then attacks the crocodile's gut, splitting the unfortunate beast in two and, thanks to its protective coat of mud, emerges safely. It is sufficient to say that this method of crocodile killing is wholly and utterly inaccurate.

The weasel was also considered highly skilled in medicine. If its babies were killed, and it could get to them, it could bring the babies back to life. The mage with a weasel familiar may well have access to the weasel's skill in medicine, or its knowledge. With the advice of the weasel, even the lowliest of magicians might be able to concoct potions of limited healing power.

Weasels are elongated mice. Naturally.

now is our tail concluded...

These, then, are the attributes of certain familiar creatures, as ascribed to them by medieval, and earlier, scholars.

It is worth considering whether the mage should gain an animal familiar by die-roll as in *AD&D*, or whether the familiar should be selected by consideration of the personality and background of the mage. You could argue that the most appropriate familiar will respond to the summons of a spell. This already happens in the case of the *AD&D* 'special familiar', and is categorised by alignment.

Of the normal familiars the black cat may be most appropriate for stalkers of the night; the crow for those who travel; the hawk for the noble or spartan type; the owl for the patient researcher; the toad for the unpredictable one; or the weasel for the combative magician. Not every mage will fit these guidelines, and the solution should be either to seek the closest fit, or consider a less typical familiar which might be more appropriate, such as a rat, hedgehog, mole, bat, fox etc. 'Accurate' information on these may be found in any reputable medieval bestiary.

Alison Brooks & David Flin

WHITE DWARF

Letters Page,
White Dwarf,
Enfield Chambers,
16/18 Low Pavement,
Nottingham NG1 7DL

IMPERIAL SPACE MARINES

Support your
IMPERIAL GOVERNOR

Andrew Butler, Teignmouth, Devon: The new format is much better for hitting recalcitrant players on the head!

*And there you have it, the definitive comment on the new look for **White Dwarf**. Right, that's the letters done for another month... Can I go home now, please?*

Oh, alright then. There's this:

Steve Matthews, Hertford: Congratulations to Simon Nicholson for his assessment of Lovecraft in WD91. Setting the Mythos in the context of Darwin and Einstein is an interesting subject, and not to detract from the article, I'd like to add one point concerning the characters rather than the monsters. It is true that the heroes are dull and two-dimensional, but this accidentally allows them to become a sort of Everyman - the middle-aged, middle-class intellectual seeks Knowledge Man Was Not Meant To Have and thus comes to a sticky end. This old Gothic/Romance theme (see *Frankenstein*) neatly caught the fears of the age as outlined by Mr Nicholson.

Brian McIntosh, Glasgow: What's this? Simon Nicholson saying that H P Lovecraft isn't a good writer? That section of the article *Ghosties and Ghoulies and... Squid?* (WD91) should have been condemned. His characters weren't all that well fleshed out, but what do you expect from a writer whose stories are only about 13 pages long?

Nick Walker, Huddersfield, W Yorks: *Ghosties and Ghoulies and... Squid?* seemed quite a good article but for two errors:

So where does black magic and the occult comes into the game? Simple, it doesn't. Now a quote from HPL: 'All my stories, unconnected as the may be, are based on the fundemental lore or legend that this world was inhabited at one time by another race who, in practising black magic lost their foothold and were expelled, yet live on outside ever ready to take possession of this earth again.'

*The most famous of these inventions must surely be the **Necronomicon**, a hideous tome penned by the mad Arab, Abdul Alhazred. Though totally fictious, many were convinced of its existence.* Well, when HPL wrote his tales this may have been the case, but as I type this I have a copy of a book called *The Necronomicon or The Book of Dead Names*, published by Corgi in 1978 at my side...

*Hmmm. I'm not going to comment on Lovecraft's writing style at all, interpret that as you will. 'Black magic' is not a part of the game at all, even if a few tentacled refugees used it eons ago. But come on, guys, did it never occur to any of you that perhaps all the One True **Necronomicons** that Nick Walker and the others who wrote in claim to have were written after the event? Sorry to disappoint everybody, but the book didn't and doesn't exist as the thing it is supposed to be in the stories. Subsequent writers have written Necromonicons as exercises in Lovecraft-trivia. As a hideous, blaspheming tome of Forbidden Lore and Sanity-Blasting Secrets, the Necronomicon had and has no more real existence than... well... than I have...*

And:

Neil Grant, Ynysbwl, Mid Glamorgan: *A Hard Act to Follow* (WD91) was quite good, but I am amazed that Mark Lee did not mention the Easter Rising and the legacy of violence that this created. Another interesting fact is that on the average night in London in the 20's, the Metropolitan Police issued several hundred revolvers to its officers - despite not even training the men in their use. Firearms were far more easily available to the average police officer in the street, though specialised units such as C-11 and C-13 did not exist to provide expert support.

And firearms were available to the general public on a far larger scale than today as well. Shotguns, rifles and pistols are listed as mail order items(!) in the 1904 Army and Navy Stores catalogue (which is a bit before the time under consideration), but close control of guns didn't come about until the late 20's in Britain. Before the Great War, you could get hold of Lee-Enfield rifles from the A&N, but you did at least have to be British, by Gad! In addition, there were all the assorted captured souvenirs from the battles of the Great War in circulation. Nobody (in the relevant stories) is particularly surprised that Bulldog Drummond and other heroes have and use their old service revolvers, for example.

Tom Hutchinson, Greenwich, London: If you want letters about rules additions then here's one for *WFRP* which seems to have lost its system for conflicting actions.

Conflicting actions are basically when one character's statistics come into direct confrontation with another. As an example, two identical people try to catch something that has been thrown into the air. Obviously, they both have an equal chance to catch whatever-it-is and therefore stop the other person from doing so. There is no mechanic for handling these situations in *WFRP*. You would clearly test on the average of *Dex* and *I*, but how would you actually mesh the tests together?

You could make a single test and apply it to a chosen set of statistics, but that would not be right for the other person, who lacks a chance to pass or fail.

Another method would be to have both characters make tests and hope for the best. If one fails and the other succeeds, fine. But what happens if they both succeed? So here goes the (almost) perfect method.

Both characters make a roll and one can see immediately what has happened. If they both fail then it can be assumed that they were so busy shoving each other out of the way that neither of them caught the whatever-it-was. If one fails and the other succeeds then it is also fairly obvious that the person who made their test caught the thing. The really neat bit now comes in. If both characters succeed then the one who rolled the highest number catches the object or wins the confrontation. If you think about it, it's logical. If one person person has a 70% chance of succeeding and another has only a 30% chance, then a roll of 69 compared to one of 29 will show that, although both are striving to their utmost, the roll of 69 reflects the higher skill of the first person relative to the second.

*I would have thought that the lowest score was more appropriate: a very low score indicates, at least to my eye, a greater 'margin of safety' in whatever was being attempted, or a greater degree of success. The result that is furthest away from failure has been achieved - which is, presumably, why **RuneQuest** uses a system of very low rolls to indicate critical hits.*

Neil Grant (reprise): With reference to Joe Williams' idea of knights in cars (WD91), I think he'll soon find that people begin to siphon off the fuel for use in Molotov cocktails and flamethrowers: you just can't isolate one area from technological progress, particularly, as pointed out, weapons technology. Anyway, a car is a fairly effective weapon in its own right. Add some steel plates to your everyday pickup and see which is in better shape after a charge: the car or the mounted knight! Still, it might be possible to have a world where technology and magic co-exist, strive for superiority or, like Tekumel, where some 'magic' is actually technology.

As a matter of interest, not only was the phonograph around in Roman times, but Hero of Alexandria published a book, the *Pneumatics*, which showed a number of steam-powered devices at an even earlier date!

***Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay** has such a mixed magic/technology base, with magic and crude firearms in the same game.*

Technology and magic don't overlap much, but they can produce similar effects.

As a more general point, at what point does a game stop being fantasy and turn into 'science fiction' or 'science fantasy' when technology is inserted into its background? ***Warhammer 40,000*** *is almost certainly more 'science' than 'fantasy', but the background treats technology in very much in the same way as other games treat magic: it's something mysterious and a force in its own right that no-one really understands.*

Paul Killworth, Headington, Oxford: I was interested to see that Joe Williams had no idea of the technology required to build computers TVs and the rest. By the time anyone has purified the silicon for the computer chips, produced the electric power stations for these machines to run off, the factories to make the chips themselves and the TV broadcasting stations (with their transmission towers) and the power lines to carry electricity to all these, in addition to metal industries, petroleum and rubber needed for cars...

OK, you've made a point. Technology needs a technical base. You can't have sheet steel for cars, for example, without bulk steel-working and you can't have that without mining and iron smelting technology, and a working knowledge of chemistry. You can't get all that lot until you can free excess labour from the business of growing food (which is pure survival) and put them onto something a bit more long term.

Tom Hutchinson (again): Would it be pedantic to point out that the woman on the front cover of WD92 is not using her sword the way it is supposed to be employed. A throat slash with a katana is never practical since it is a big hack that leaves you wide open. She has also decentralized her blade, dramatically reducing the amount of power available to her. A far better alternative would be a thrust to the throat in combination with a head strike. It never fails against orcs.

Who said LRPGs were pointless?

Yes, it's a bit pedantic, and no, we didn't say that.

Gruzk Bloodgobbler (aka Darren Turpin), Leeds: About *Blood on the Snow* (WD91)... Grayte, lots ov stunties to rip an' crunch an' smash an' mayme, an' mangel an'... Oh, 'scuse me, got a bit enfeosiastik. Rite, lads, let's get to wurk on dem stunties. Lads? Lads? Where de 'ell am I gonna get sixt... err... six... er... lots ov Orcs, not to menshun a bleedin' fortriss? I only get a cuppla quids a week (an' sum 'obbits if i'm gud). Orcs costs a packet, so duz gobbos an' hoomans an' stunties too as well. Didn't dat dozy personidge Matt Connell fink ov dis when 'e rote da fing?

No, afraid not. And it didn't occur to me either. Sorry. But ***Warhammer Battle*** *is just that: you need several units on each side to fight battles. Skirmishes do work, but they're nowhere near as interesting and exciting.*

If all else fails, of course, and you are stuck for a half-regiment of orcs (or whatever) at short notice you can always use some card counters to make up a few extra figures. But that's nowhere near as much fun as advancing on a few hapless stunties with a proper painted regiment of figures...

Still, in future we'll try to make ***Warhammer*** *scenarios a little more accesible to those of you with only a few figures. Next month there will be a* ***Warhammer 40,000*** *scenario which won't use anywhere near that many figures... But then WH40K is designed for large skirmishes rather than full-blown battles. But while we're on the subject of* ***Warhammer****:*

Jens Kristian Lindhart Boll, Aarhus, Denmark: I must express my fears about Citadel launching a hobgoblin rocket team. I fear such weapons might seriously damage the game balance set up in *Warhammer*. The rockets bear a striking resemblance to the Congreve rockets of the Napoleonic era. Despite claims that Congreve rockets were highly inefficient, they proved highly devastating. In 1807 a British force peppered Copenhagen with Congreve rockets, killing almost 2000 people, injuring more and razing whole quarters of the city.

I went off to beat the truth out of Rick Priestley. Who was responsible for the rockets and their potential effects on game balance?

'Sorry about Copenhagen - I'm sure it won't happen again. I was once told that following the destruction of the Danish fleet the government of the day instigated a massive tree planting programme which, incidentally, has just come to fruition!

'The Hobgoblin rockets will be followed by a Samurai version - I don't think the use of rockets unbalances the game unduly, try them and see.'

Oddly, I didn't ask Rick about Copenhagen at all. He just has a guilty nature...

'Eavy Metal *and the general subject of figure painting attracts letters every now and then...*

Ian Williams, Brockenhurst, Hants: How do you do it? My models have improved no end! It's great, it's amazing, it's so good, in fact, that I've changed my method altogether! I'm talking about *'Eavy Metal*! OK, I know WD is the best mag out, but why didn't you print this before? Anyway, I'm sure I'm not alone. Everyone I know has used this method and produced a better standard on their miniatures! Well done, *White Dwarf*!

Adrian Mansell, Tipton, West Midlands: After reading the *'Eavy Metal* article in WD91, I grabbed my cash and headed for the nearest modelling shop to get myself a pin-vice, and came back very quickly after seeing the price of a pin-vice (£5.95). So, after a bit of thought I had this idea: why not mount a drill bit in a watchmaker's screwdriver? This is a lot cheaper than buying a pin-vice.

All you need is a small screwdriver and a drill bit. You can buy watchmaker's screwdrivers very cheaply or you can use any small screwdriver you have about. Remove the screwdriver blade, insert the drill bit in the resulting hole and glue it in place (any good glue will do). And, *Trah - Dah!* There you have it, a perfectly serviceable drill.

Just as an aside, we're still looking for hints and tips on ***'Eavy Metal****-like subjects. The best ones will get used in a future feature, and we'll raid the WD piggy bank, or do something similar, for the ones we use...*

Giles Griffith, Flockton, W Yorks: After reading WD91's *Eavy Metal*, I have a question for you. Are all your staff hippies? The article woz brill!

Jim Beattie, Cumnock, Ayrshire: The Games Workshop hippies (y'know, the painters) are really beginning to get up my nose. 'Why?' I hear you ask. No? Well, I'm going to tell you anyway. The GW Hippies have an unnatural and peverse obsession with green! Did it never occur to anyone that Orcs might not be green? The *Tolkien Bestiary*, p198: '...their skin was black as wood that has been charred by flame.' Since Tolkein invented the aforesaid creatures (orcs, not hippies) in their current form, I reckon if he says they're black, they're BLACK! I prepared to accept that Orcs may be various shades of brown or black, but not green... Goblins, yes, but that's a different matter.Could we please see one or two black/brown orcs on the figures pages, they look just as good if painted well.

Them's black Tolkien Orcs, these's green Citadel Hippies...

S J Harris, Ilford, Essex: Prompted by my involvement in my first full game of *AD&D*, I regret to say that it took me until your 10th anniversary to buy my first copy of WD.

As with any hobby magazine, I think the Letters Page is especially important as an indication of current feeling and trends amongst participants, With this in mind, I am surprised at some letters complaining about the lack of *AD&D* coverage. I am impressed with the column space that you do give to it, as a 'house magazine' (your phrase) of a company making a rival game to *AD&D*!

Keep up the good work (as we letter-page writers say) and rest assured that WD90 will not be the last I buy.

Rod Duncan, Sheffield: In reply to Tim Nightingale (WD92), I've always found that *White Dwarf* issues are like good wine. Lay them down in a dark cupboard for a while, let them mature, then take them out and enjoy them at leisure.

Oh, that's why I've been given this office...

Letters edited in a dark cupboard by a non-existent Mike Brunton